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Presented to the

by the Author.

# A PRIMÆVAL BRITISH METROPOLIS

WITH SOME NOTES ON

## THE ANCIENT TOPOGRAPHY OF THE SOUTH-WESTERN PENINSULA OF BRITAIN

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# A PRIMÆVAL BRITISH METROPOLIS

## THE PEN-PITS

Immediately adjoining the beautiful grounds at Stourhead is a large tract of land forming the strongest possible contrast to them. It is not a mere naturally wild or barren tract, but rather a Ninevitish desolation. It is evident, at a glance, that the present surface has been at some time modified by the labour of an immense number of human hands, directed by some motive common to them all. For what purpose seems to have been forgotten for nearly eighteen centuries, and to have still remained as a puzzle to the nineteenth. The learned and munificent topographer Sir Richard Colt Hoare, at whose threshold it lay, passed the last thirty years of his life in unsuccessful surmises of its object; his last judgment being that it had "never as yet been accounted for in a satisfactory manner".[1] These remains of an occupation of some kind by a very numerous past population, extend over what may be described as a large tract of very elevated land commanding extensive views, especially over a great extent of Dorsetshire and Somersetshire southward and westward. The district itself is a sort of raised basin, in a manner shut in by hills and natural steeps on all sides, and includes the sources of

[1] 1831. Mod. Wilts. H. of Westbury. p. 53.

several rivers which thence take their Lot-and-Abraham departure to the two opposite seas—the English and Bristol Channels, which are both only beyond actual view. The natural strength of the position has been greatly reinforced by earthworks, some of which are of nearly the largest class that are met with in this kingdom. A large part of the inclosed area is still covered with thousands of open pits, mostly dug in that gravelly soil which caps so many of the higher table lands in this part of England. These pits are of various sizes, with intervals about sufficient for a good path between each. Some very considerable portions have however been levelled and cultivated in recent times, with a success which offers a high premium to the speedy obliteration of the whole monument. This process is rapidly going on, so that any one approaching will hardly fail to meet a train of five or six carts, loaded with the larger stones thrown out from the levelled gravel, being carried to mend the roads for miles around. In other of the yet uncultivated parts, towards the southwest and nearer the ramparts, the pits appear to have been more anciently filled or silted up, but the surface still remains so rough and uneven as to shew that these parts were also originally occupied in like manner.

Any one who visits this spot for the first time, must be astonished that so extensive and remarkable a præhistoric monument has not held a more prominent place in the writings of antiquaries and topographers. Indeed the shyness of some of those, whose special task it would have seemed to be to account for it, has been unusual. Leland went over the ground, and mentions four camps "about Stourton", but is silent as to these extensive remains of an ancient population among which he saw the

camps. Sir W. Camden merely mentions the "mean village" of Pen which straggles among one section of the pits: but, although he enlarges upon the two battles, of Kenwalch A.D. 658 and of Edmund Ironside A.D. 1016, which he, and his copiers to this day, have attributed to this spot; he says nothing about these more ancient remains with which this and other neighbouring villages are surrounded; and for which, if it had been the place of these battles, these would have been an inadequate cause. Many of the topographers and historians who have felt compelled to mention the phenomenon have shrunk from any attempt to account for it, and all who have so attempted have ended with confessing themselves unable to do more than to leave the question unanswered as they found it. Yet even the situation itself is remarkable as pointing to some possible connection with subsequent boundaries; for it stands at the very point from which the limits of Dorset, Somerset, and Wilts, radiate; as if it had been the ruling centre of three provinces, like the governor's house of one of Mr. Jeremy Bentham's workhouses.

This joint connection with them has in fact imposed, upon the historians of all the three counties, the task of taking some notice of a monument too conspicuous to be silently passed. But they all leave it, as they find it, unexplained. Of the pits, Hutchins tells us that "Tradition says they were made by Canute".[1] Collinson recounts the various conjectures current in his time, but leaves them all open. He estimates the ground occupied by the pits at two hundred acres, and the number at "considerably upwards of twenty thousand".[2] Sir Richard Hoare,

[1] H. of Dorset. 1st edn. Vol. II. p. 233. 3rd edn. Vol. III. p. 196.

[2] H. of Somerset. Vol. III. p. 43.

in the first part of his Ancient Wiltshire published in 1810, reviews the various preceding conjectures and, although he then seemed inclined to think them in some way connected with an earlier British occupation, yet wavers, and ultimately seems to yield to the notion that they were temporarily made during the resistance to Kenwalch A.D. 658. He estimates the area covered by the pits at about seven hundred acres, of which nearly half had been brought into cultivation.[1] He gives an engraved plan, but to have represented upon it the number of the pits would have much exceeded his scale, and he merely symbolizes their honeycomblike arrangement, and shows the distribution over the area, of those not then destroyed. Living on the spot, Sir Richard naturally continued his observation through his after life; and reverts to the subject several times in his later work, the History of Modern Wilts. In the Hundred of Mere published in 1822[2] he reconsiders it with much earnestness and at some length; but although he says "I still adhere to the opinion I stated in my History of Ancient Wilts 'that they were the work of a rude nation, and of British origin'", he concludes . . . "At all events, these pits present a very singular appearance, and will ever I fear, find food for conjecture rather than positive conviction".

This number of the Modern Wilts was reviewed[3] by the Rev. T. D. Fosbrooke, who says "Sir Richard Colt Hoare very properly vindicates their antiquity as a work of the Britons. We perfectly coincide with him" . . . . He goes on to say "If this opinion be correct . . . . . this place was once a very ample

[1] Ancient Wilts, Vol. I. pp. 35-38. [2] p. 91.

[3] Gent. Mag. 1822. Vol. XCII. ii. 610. Reprinted in Mod. Wilts, Addenda, 1845. p. 17.

British city, unimproved by Roman refinements" .... "—it is not a common species of antiquity, and would prove the largest British city in the realm". Yet, notwithstanding this encouragement, Sir R. C. Hoare in a later number[1] thus again mentions these "very extensive pits or excavations which covered about seven hundred acres, and which have never been accounted for in a satisfactory manner".

The Rev. W. Phelps[2] says "But the most curious relic of early antiquity, and which (after so many various conjectures) still remains as mysterious as the origin of *Abury* and *Stonehenge*, is the large tract of land in the parish of Pen, and in the adjoining hamlet of *Gaspar*, covered by an extent of *pits*, excavated originally over 700 acres of ground. They are placed so contiguous to each other, that there is barely room left to ride between them. Various have been the conjectures about the singular appearance which these pits present, and which are unequalled in our island. Some have supposed them to have been the pits where the rude Britons sheltered themselves and families; whilst others have degraded them into stone quarries".

The latest writer on Dorsetshire[3] finds himself still in the elevated but cloudy regions of unsubstantial speculation. He even says of the supposed inhabitants of the pits, "I might be tempted to throw back the period of their existence to a far remote pre-Celtic age, even to an indefinable antiquity, ere Britain had been severed from the European Continent, but I hesitate to commit myself to a hypothesis, subversive of the popular creed, although it may have some appearance of probability in its favour".

[1] Hund. of Westbury, 1831. p. 53.
[2] Hist. of Somerset, Vol. I. 1837. pp. 194-5.
[3] C. Warne, Ancient Dorset, 1872. p. 15.

As might have been expected, so conspicuous a monument could not have escaped the notice of the two county Archæological societies of Wilts and Somerset, but unfortunately without any nearer approach towards the desired solution. Mr. W. Cunnington appears to have called the attention of the Wiltshire Society to these pits in 1861,[1] when it was agreed "that they were the rude habitations of primitive and uncivilized races". In the Somersetshire volume, for 1856-7 is a paper by the late Rev. F. Warre, the explorer of the walls and pits of Worle Hill, and the explainer and classifier of the West of England earthworks. He begins by calling the Pen Pits "the crux of Antiquaries". Afterwards he transcribes Sir R. C. Hoare's earliest account in 1810, but altogether dissents from his surmise that the pits had been dwellings. He says that "they are so extensive that, had this been the case, they would have afforded accommodation for the inhabitants of the whole Island, instead of those of one district".[2] Perhaps however it may be one of the great lessons of such a monument, that our current estimate of the numbers of prælhistoric populations falls much short of the reality. But in his next two pages he tries to account for the immense number and extent of the excavations by suggesting that it may have been a great factory of querns or grindstones "taken away, probably to a considerable distance". This seems to contrast rather unfairly the number of "the inhabitants of the whole Island" with that of the millstones which they required.

[1] Wiltsh. Mag. Vol. VII. p. 242.

[2] Som. Proceedings, Vol. VII. p. 55.

It seems therefore that this long standing "crux of Antiquaries" still holds them suspended. But, for many centuries, contemporaneously current with the continuance of this archæological puzzle upon the earth's surface, there has also separately come down to us in books an historical riddle, that has no less tortured the researches and conjectures of chroniclers, topographers, and critics. This is "Cair Pensauelcoit" one of the names contained in the ancient Catalogue of British Cities found in some copies of the work which usually passes under the name of "Nennius". It is believed that, if the archæological puzzle and the historical riddle can now be brought together, they will at once resolve each other's long kept secret. This it is thought can be done almost instantaneously by the help of the most simple process known in topographical philology.

If we translate into English the last syllable of the name of the British city—"-coit", or modern Welsh "-coed", or Cornish "-coid", or Armorican "-coat", we get its equivalent "wood", and this at once shows "Pensauelcoit" as "Pensauelwood", obviously the same as "Penselwood", the still living name of the "ignobilis viculus" whose two or three straggling streets of scattered houses are spotted about among the remaining areas of ancient pits; and within the ramparts of the desolated city—as we may now venture to call it. Like the little group of sparks that still glow in the middle of a large sheet of burnt paper, this scattered village is indeed the survivor to our time, of the great wasted city within which it stands, and whose hitherto unrecognised name it still bears.

That an appropriation so obvious, of a name that has been so many centuries vagrant or even mendicant, was never hitherto made, can be amply accounted for by the history of the error which first led it astray. It is evident that the early desolation of Caer Pensauelcoit, had already resulted in a complete oblivion of its whereabouts, before the name itself made its way into the written materials of history as now current. This will not be deemed incredible when the obscurity of the catastrophes which have devastated Silchester, Wroxeter, and the other Roman-British cities shall be remembered; especially the uncertainty which still hangs over the locality of the ill-fated Andredeschester and others of them. How much more likely is this oblivion to have blotted out all traditions of one which was probably extinguished at an early time of the intrusion of the Romans, of whose occupation it contains no vestige; of whose quadrangular civic arrangements even, its remains exemplify a complete contempt or ignorance; and from whose great highways, that afterwards became the instruments of their dominion, it is entirely secluded?

The name seems to have first passed into the main stream of English history, through the Latin of Geoffrey of Monmouth, where also first appeared a blundering gloss upon it, which turned it into the wrong groove from which it has never since found its way towards its right place. Geoffrey tells us, that when the Emperor Claudius (A.D. 47.) sent Vespasian into Britain to reduce the revolt of Arviragus, Vespasian left Arviragus unattacked at Rutupi (by Thanet) and sailed to the shore of Totnes (Totonesium littus), and marched directly to besiege "Kairpen-Huelgoit, quæ Exonia vocatur".

The last three words here appear for the first time,

in the Latin of Geoffrey. The story itself without this gloss is found in the two Welsh Chronicles "Brut Tysilio" and "Brut Gr. ab Arthur".[1]

The story however, with the wrong explanation "Exeter" passed down to later times through many of the chronicles and histories of England, especially the omnivorous ones. But more particularly was it treasured by those of Exeter, to whose many other historical laurels, the successful resistance and repulse of a seven days' siege from Vespasian, was an achievement not to be lightly parted with. Their indomitable and patriotic mayor, John Shillingford (A.D. 1477), claimed it as an ancient name of Exeter, clerically varied by him to "Penholtkeyre". John Vowell *alias* Hoker, uncle of the Judicious Richard Hooker and first Chamberlain of the city, much cherished this trophy; and produced it, varied, on various occasions (A.D. 1583-87) as three separate ancient names of Exeter,—"Penhulgoite", "Pennehaltcaire", and "Pennecaire"; and these are not only copied by the later annalists of the city and county, but even one of the most learned of our living national historians shows a manifest unwillingness to let it drop.[2]

The first who ventured to interrupt the long currency of this error was Sir W. Camden (1587); but not to set it right. His "torch-bearer", the learned Welshman Humphrey Llwyd, had however already (1570) repeated it in terms which express a cautious reserve of his own acceptance

[1] Myvyrian Arch. Vol. II. 1801. p. 193. "Exon" has been inserted in the later Hafod chronicle, printed at the foot of the page, probably by that time borrowed back from Geoffrey's Latin, which had then become a great authority.

[2] Archæol. Journal, Vol. XXX. p. 306 and Macmillan's Magazine, Sept. 1873. p. 473.

of it.[1] Adapting the vagrant name to his own purposes, Camden supposes that the true reading may have been "Pont-Ivel-Coit" and that it means Ilchester, as "Pons ad Iuell in Sylva", or "the bridge on the Ivell in the wood". But his faith in this interpretation is far from settled, for when he is describing Cornwall he says that it was Lostwithiel, or the adjoining height of Restormel, that "was called in the British histories Pen-Vchel-Coit or the lofty-hill in the wood, which some will have to be Exeter". When however he treats of Exeter itself, he retains among its ancient names "Pencair", being the same name in one of the varieties, as we have seen, of the local topographer John Vowell. Thus he either makes the names to have belonged to three different places, or leaves the choice of its place to his readers. In either case he admits his conviction that the certain place had not yet been found.[2]

It will be seen that Camden's "Pen-Vchel-Coit" is the form of the name as it appears not only in Geoffrey of Monmouth but in the Welsh chronicles which Geoffrey translated and adorned. He was followed by Archbishop Usher, who however produces the name from the other ancient authority, the Nennian Catalogue of Cities. It is here that it appears as "Pensauelcoit"; but Usher demurs at Camden's assignments to Ilchester and Lostwithiel, and proposes Pevensey, the "Pensevellum" of the diarists of the Norman invasion.[3]

Once unsettled from its quasi-traditional attach-

[1] "Isca .... Caer Wysg ..... ab Anglis Exeter appellatur. Nec me latet aliquos hanc *Caerpennuchelgoed* olim a Britannis vocatam affirmare". Commentariolum, ed. 1731. p. 22.

[2] Britannia. Cornwall, Devon, Somerset.

[3] Primordia. Dubl. 1639. p. 64.

ment to Exeter, the name became a free subject of the conjectures of later etymologists. Among these William Baxter[1] adopts the Ilchester theory. He supports this by dividing the name into four words "Pen sâv vêl coit" and explaining them separately. While so doing he illustrates his explanation of "coit" by the example "Coitmatir" rendered by him, nearly as Asser had done long before, "Ingens Sylva", or "Selwude", which he thinks must formerly have extended to include Ilchester. In this he unconsciously very nearly approached the task which is our present business; and which indeed, if his own theory had not prevented the name "Penselwood", here proposed, from coming to his mind, he might have anticipated.

Another remarkable example of this fossil-hunting method of dealing with the name, by cracking it into fragments, was that of the late learned Mr. Joseph Stevenson, when editing Nennius in 1838 for the Historical Society; which only serves to shew that the secret of it was still wandering unsolved in the regions of conjecture. In the list of Cities, he prints this name—"Cair Pensa, vel Coyt", as if it had been two alias names of one city, and accordingly he also gives it two separate places in his index, both as "Cair Coyt (?)" and "Cair Pensa (?)". This most ingenious misinterpretation has since sprouted out into a still wider and more positive error; for Mr. Pearson[2] guesses the "Pexa" station in the northern division of the Anonymous Ravennat to be "the Caer Pensa of Nennius, near Dumbarton". The learned editors of the Monumenta Historica Britannica revert to Archbishop Usher's "Pevensey": but there is a still later attempt to facilitate the solution of the

[1] Gloss. Antiq. Brit. 1733. s. voc. *Iscalis*.

[2] Hist. Maps, 1869. p. 10.

name by breaking it into several pieces. The Hon. Algernon Herbert gives it thus "Pen-savle-coed, statio capitalis in sylvâ".[1]

It is thought that all such speculations must now end, and that the identity here claimed needs no other proof than to place side by side this ancient name of a long lost but evidently famous city, with the still living name of a spot which presents such manifest traces of having once been pre-eminently so occupied. That "Pensauelcoit" is the same as "Penselwood" will it is believed be accepted at sight by the most squeamish of antiquarian critics.

## PENSELWOOD.

But the local identity of the ancient Caer Pensauelcoit, with the existing Penselwood[2] will be most fully confirmed by a survey of the place, and the material evidences still remaining there. In fact these can only be accounted for by some such cause. Moreover, any one who walks over the ground, with the conviction which it is hoped has been here established, that the remains are really those of a city, must also admit, not perhaps without astonishment, that it was a very great and populous one. Indeed, the only comparison of the kind that it will bear out, is with the London of even a recent time: say of the end of the last century. Whether or not the entire area of the basin, including the now grassy slopes and woody heights of Stourhead Park,

[1] Irish Nennius, 1848, Add. N. p. iv.

[2] The indigenes call it "Penzleood", with chief accent on the last syllable and accessory accent on the first.

was covered with these closely planted human habitations; it is certain that the whole must have been included within its fortified circle, and the immense extent of the remains now actually to be seen, and which have been seen within this generation, is quite enough to take off the edge of disbelief in this larger area. There is no reason to limit the habitations to the lower half of the basin, where they have not yet been obliterated by modern cultivation; seeing that the upper half, although now emparked, shares with it all the requirements and advantages of the situation.

The length of the basin from north to south is about three miles. The river Stour, rising from the heraldric six springs within the basin, winds through it by a deep valley, and passes out into the more open country through a gorge at the south side. The north side of the basin, and the longest portion of the western side is bounded by high and precipitous hills, or natural escarpments that may have been augmented or completed by art; crowned by several fortified posts, which are probably those mentioned by Leland. On the western side, for about half a mile of its southern end, and along the entire south side of about a mile, the table land with the remains of habitations is open, and overlooks the distant expanse of lower country round; and this more open although still very elevated part is inclosed all the way by a lofty artificial earth rampart or escarpment; which makes a distinct rectangular turn at the south-west corner, and then continues along the south side to the outlet of the river; beyond which it is renewed and continued to the height on the other side.

Of course, this outlet of the river valley must have been a point of special care to the defenders. Within

where the rampart crosses it, the natural projecting bluffs which, near this opening, overlook the internal course of the river, have appearances of having been also artificially acclivitated; and, somewhat farther in, the river is commanded by a regular highly raised earthwork fortress, now called "Castle Orchard". This is one of that kind of strongholds that are somewhat comet-shaped, with a separately inclosed and elevated keep at one end. The keep here is very strong and is circular, and immediately overhangs the river and closely bars the valley. Behind the keep is an oblong sort of outer bailey, also strongly and separately fortified, and extending away from it into the midst of one of the largest of the remaining groups of pits.

Good water is most abundant within the basin. Besides the Stour with its six springs, several smaller springs contribute to it before it passes out: and these are so bountiful as to have their mill power intercepted, almost at their sources, by several large factories established of late years in the midst of the ancient remains.

The road, by which the present village is approached from the south, climbs the ascent outside the western escarpment, and enters by what appears to have been the ancient principal gate; having some appearances of a considerable outwork on the left side. Not far within is the church, with a curiously sculptured Norman doorway. This is itself an antiquity among English churches, but at a wide interval from the remains among which it stands, and compared with which it is but a yesterday's novelty. The village is dispersed, as shrunken successors of large ancient populations are apt to be—not to mention neighbouring hamlets—; but the meanness noted by Camden, has since his

day been much cheered or mitigated by the tillage and improvement that are gradually eating up the primæval surface.

As to the pits themselves, they vary greatly in size; in which respect they seem to differ from the small clusters that are sometimes found in proper hill fortresses, where a certain approach to uniform size is mostly observable. These, no doubt, partake of the character of garrison barracks, or lodgings for single men. Those at Penselwood, on the contrary are adapted to the various wants of different conditions and families, living in a municipal state. They are however approximately circular; and are spread over the raised plain, and the slopes and hill-spurs on each side of the river, from within the opening for its southward exit, until lost in the woodlands and cultivation of the park-grounds, where necessarily they have been obliterated. Of course the depths of the pits were originally increased by the piling up of the excavated materials upon the tops of the intervals; and traces of this super-position may be observed where the present agricultural levelling is in progress: and, as might be expected, where the ground has been newly levelled, the new surface is lower. In this increase of the original elevation, by the addition of the excavated materials, some analogy with modern town construction must have resulted, from the slight combination, therein presented, of building with excavation; except that here the public thoroughfares would be on the tops of the foundations of the party walls. These interval wall-paths sometimes seem to be continuously considerably wider; perhaps having been arterial ways or main streets; but the general arrangement is what would be called "higgledy-piggledy", in which the Roman quadrangular system is ignored in

favour of a honeycombed arrangement, different from what might have prevailed if the plan had been influenced by Roman habits. A tradition of this Celtic freedom of plan may still survive in those villages of west Cornwall that lie beyond the rectilineating action of thoroughfare highways. It also remains in some pure Irish communities such as the Claddagh at Galway. The conical or bowl-shape of the cavities, as described by some writers, is even less than might have been expected from the effect of time and weather upon the uncemented gravel; although the interval passages along the tops have probably been reduced in width by the weather action that has converted these cylinders into cones.

Although these remains of habitations now show nothing more than pits, we are not justified in thinking that their former occupants were no better than troglodyte savages. If we may not designate them by the affected appellation of "our ancestors", they are nevertheless very nearly related to ourselves. But the pedigree is long and complex, and not unmixed with baser matter. If however we had been disposed to think that these old people actually dwelt in such pits as we now see them, or, as some have said "rude circular huts", or the "work of a rude nation"; we might remind ourselves that, after a waste of fifteen or sixteen hundred years, our own homes, if any trace at all of them should then remain, will have come to about the same complexion. We have lately had a rare opportunity, in the site of the new Law Courts, of seeing what central London looks like when its buildings are levelled; and the difference was not very great of the aspect of that clearance and the present appearance of this ancient city. Besides the luxuriance of the thorn and the thistle—not so great as

the lapse of so many centuries might have accounted for—the chief difference is that the cavities of the ancient metropolis favour a circular plan, whilst those of the living capital have a rectangular prevalence. What was the character of the superstructures there is nothing left to show. The dry and freely excavated surface-bed of green-sand gravel was called into use as deep as it went, until it reached a level floor of hard rock; but what was raised over it was most likely a timber frame work, filled in with wattled work, and rendered weather tight by plaster and thatch or wooden shingle. These materials of course have long since perished. As there is no evidence that this British city ever accepted the influence of the Romans, it cannot be supposed that its builders ever attained to what is now called an architectural style; which with us has been either directly or mediately derived from them. But there may have been what is no despicable ingredient even of what creates a style: a skilful adaptation of available materials to the wants and conveniences, and even the comforts of life. So large and organized a community must have been the growth of many centuries; and at certain numerical intervals among ourselves, who need not disdain a close ethnic relationship to these ancient citizens, will almost certainly appear a born improver of his surroundings—a genius, indeed,—who, even though untaught, practises some useful or ornamental adjustment of his material resources, which instantly commands imitation: and it is inconceivable that in so large a body of mankind, living together for so many ages in succession, certain contrivances of convenience or economy, and even of ornament, should not have accumulated, and by common co-imitation have reached that uniformity and prevalence which

constitutes what may fairly be called a "style" or an "order"; but which might have come to an end along with their national independence, or given place to the imported civilizations of conquerors or succeeding peoples, such as the Romans, or their degrading imitators who soon followed them in the occupation of the land.

But even the capacity of their dwellings may not have been unworthy of comparison with that of our own down to very recent times. At intervals in our towns, among the large and lofty buildings with which we have now become accustomed, may still be seen fragments of old street frontages, which in this respect the older city may have equalled or rivalled. And even some features of that innate style above surmised may have come down to us, particularly in our timber framed houses. Any one who passed through the town of Shrewsbury, some eight or ten years since, might have seen a large block of town houses in process of destruction to make way for a new market. These consisted of wooden frames, having the interspaces filled with basket work afterwards covered with plaster. This is a more primitive stage than that of the south-west of England, where these plastered intervals are always found to be upon laths nailed to the wooden frames. This is a method of construction that would have been both obvious to the needs of the most rudimentary social condition, and which might have even reached perfection at the simplest stage of mechanical practice. It is even now common to a fisherman's or coastguardsman's or shepherd's look out upon a cliff or down, and a palatial manor house in a park-like combe. The timber houses that still remain with us are perhaps a legacy to us from these our long past predecessors; and, except the superior economy of

the square ground-plans and the lineal arrangement of the thoroughfares, it is quite possible that this ancient city did not much differ from that aspect of our towns which has scarcely yet entirely passed away.

Except towards the north-east, where the view is limited by the heights of Selwood and the great chalk ridge that stretches away above Hindon towards Heytesbury and Warminster, the prospects from the elevations which bound the basin are almost unlimited in all directions, and nearly extend to the two seas, the English and Bristol Channels.[1] To the north the view reaches to the heights around Bath, and for some distance the bank of the Wansdyke at the south of that city actually makes the sky-line, except perhaps overtopped by the cap of Lansdown beyond. The place is indeed the centre and key to the district now covered by the counties of Dorset, Somerset, and Wilts, which here touch each other; and these three counties form the district south of the Severn in which the names of the three peoples who have afterwards settled in them have been distinguished by the termination "sæte".[2] It is scarcely beyond the limits of likelihood that the present three counties continue to our time the boundaries of the three provinces of the nation that acknowledged this for its capital, the three ingressive "sætas" having possibly appropriated the already divided territories. The geographical

[1] Sir R. C. Hoare says that the Bristol Channel can be discerned from the eminence called "Jack's Castle", near Alfred's Tower.

[2] The "Magesætas" in Huwicia is however another example; and the "Dunsætas", or Mountain-dwellers of Cambria; which last has been read "Devnsætas" or Devonshire Britons, but, as appears, upon very doubtful grounds. Also the "Wentsætas". See Thorpe's note, Laws and Institutes, folio. p. 160. All these seem to be north of the Severn.

position of such a nation would somewhat resemble that of modern France, to which the more western nation of Damnonia would have been as Spain, and of which the Bristol Channel would have been as the Mediterranean. The descent from this Caen to the lower country towards the west is rapid for about three miles, and the spurs of the hill have evidently been fortified as outworks. This may be well seen on both sides of the road on approaching from Wincanton. The neighbourhood eastward towards the forest and downs, which, after an interval of several miles are even higher than this insulated basin, has the strongest points occupied by fortresses, one of which is the singular chalk-berg known as Mere Castle.

The nearest railway stations to these remains are, Wincanton, three and a half, and Gillingham five miles. But the pleasantest approach would be by a walk of about nine miles from Bruton, leaving the turnpike at Redlynch, by an ancient open road on the right hand, which points almost straight to Alfred's Tower, surmounting the north-west edge of the basin. By this way the entire length of the park has to be traversed before the district of the pits is reached. It is worth notice also that Alfred's Tower is a most valuable index for estimating the situation, from surrounding distant heights over a large part of Dorset and Somerset.

One obstacle to an earlier recognition of the true nature of these remains has been the great scarcity of personal relics either metallic or ossuary; presumed to be necessary indications of a great ancient population. But, not to speak of the general rarity of coins and utensils in dwelling places of un-Romanized aborigines, the almost unique circumstance that these excavations have for many centuries

been open to the sky, and to the access of later peoples, may go far, if not entirely, to account for this. The value of coins and implements would be enough to prevent their lying so long uncovered; and even in other fields of ancient conflicts, where there must have been slaughters of great multitudes, no bones remain, except when one or two skeletons have been preserved by accidental contemporary burial, as at Worle and at Cissbury. The Pen-Pits are almost unique among such social remains in the complete draining quality of the gravelly soil, perhaps one of the causes of the original choice of the site. As they never retain water they have not been filled by silting.[1]

Multitudes of the other great works of ancient peoples, which cover those parts of the land that have

[1] Besides the mill-stones or querns, Sir R. C. Hoare records the finding of some fragments which he describes as Roman-British pottery; (Anc. Wilts, Vol. I.) and a bronze Torque, is figured in the Somersetshire Society's Proceedings Vol. VII.

[2] Although this monument is probably unique as a witness, both of the social condition and of the numerous populations of primæval and un-Romanized Britain, it does not seem to have obtained a place in the Schedule of the "Historical Monuments" bill. Perhaps the acreage would have been too great for a first morsel of that voracious measure. But it will be remembered that the powers asked for in that bill provided a serpent-like function of extension of its schedule or stomach for the future receipt of prey of all dimensions and kinds. Thus, ancient manuscripts need no new definition to be comprised under "historical monuments", and collections of them form a valuable item in the properties of noble and other illustrious houses; but are not specifically mentioned, otherwise than that they may be contemplated in the desired power to "break open any door"; whilst specifications of them which may at any time, by one line, be transferred to a Schedule, are meanwhile growing up in certain Blue Books. Another ancient monument seems to be omitted, although far more venerable than any yet scheduled, viz: the chief object of all laws customary or statute, the right of property.

never been cultivated, are not only void of the evidence of movable reliques, but have also lost their ancient names. Yet how much light would be thrown upon any one of them if, as in the case under our examination, it should be found still to bear a name that is actually identical with one that is also famous in the earliest written history of the part of the country where it exists. There would be no sense in rejecting this stronger and more specific testimony to its identity, because the smaller and less particular one was still absent. This place at any rate surpasses the others in that most significant of all archæological relics, a primæval historical name.

Necessarily co-ordinate with, or antecedent to, "Pensauelcoit" or "Penhuelcoit" being the pre-Saxon form of "Penselwood", is, that "Sauelcoit" or "Huelcoit" must have been an ancient name of the Forest of Selwood itself, in which Penselwood is situated. But hitherto topographers and philologers have unanimously endeavoured to give to "Selwood" a Teutonic derivation. This they do by saying that "sele" is a Saxon word for "great", or "high"[1] but they produce no authority nor precedent, and no trace of such a meaning appears in the Anglo-Saxon dictionaries; and seeing that the name is now found entire in the more ancient one of the British city, it must have been pre-Saxon. Accordingly, in the Rev. Robert Williams's Cornish Dictionary, "Uchel" is explained "High, lofty", &c., and he compares it with Welsh "uchel, huel"; he also gives "Sevel . . to stand up, to rise", &c. comparing it with Welsh "Sevyll". In Edward Lhwyd's Armoridan Vocabulary[2] "Seuel" is "To stand up". It is true

[1] Collinson, Hoare, Phelps. Also the Rev. W. Barnes, Arch. Journ. xxii. p. 289.

[2] Arch. Brit. iv. p. 211.

that Asser—himself a Welshman—gives "Coitmaur"—a name of similar meaning to "Sauelcoit"—as the British equivalent of "Selwdu",[1] and this must be left unaccounted for, except that it was most likely a synonym of his later time.

This tract of elevated woodland has probably been the shore against which conquests and revolutions of ancient peoples have several times expended their surges, and Selwood still forms what may be called the march land between Wilts and Somerset. More than this, when we find the "provincia quæ vulgo Sealundscire"[2] as the equivalent of St. Aldhelm's diocese of Sherborne, it is most likely that Selwood extended much beyond what is known to any mediæval "Perambulatio Foresta", and that it included the south-westward extension of these highlands, to be mentioned below, in the midst of which Sherborne is situated, and which in like manner forms a march country between Dorset and Somerset. Asser also describes a conspiracy as "in occidentali parte Selwuda orta" of the Bishop of Sherborne and "Sumeurtunensis pagæ comes", and Somerton is in this western district. Besides, there is not only a dedication of St. Aldhelm at Doulting on this western side, but also one at Broadway, near Ilminster, so far westward as what has since been Neroche Forest; whilst the north-eastern extent of his spiritual rule and of Sealundscire may be marked by another of his dedications at Bishopstrow (=Biscopstreu=tree) Wilts, a name which perhaps contains an echo of his living missionary preaching—earlier even than the dedication itself, necessarily posthumous. There is also the chapel on the cliff at St. Aldhelm's Head, which most likely passes on to us another of his

[1] Mon. H. B. p. 481.

[2] Ethelwerdi Chron. A.D. 709. Mon. H. B. p. 507.

dedications, and a landmark of the extension of his "parochia" or diocese to the south coast.

## THE NENNIAN CATALOGUE OF CITIES

It must not be overlooked that the two ancient records of the name of the lost city, however they have been misinterpreted, are nevertheless two totally independent witnesses, that such a city existed. The two channels by which these testimonies have descended, seem indeed from the earliest times to have been always regarded with a great amount of mysterious mutual jealousy or partizanship, that has by some been thought to have been religious, or both religious and political;[1] so that those who have totally rejected the one, as any possible source of the early history of the island, have nevertheless accepted the other, as at least honest, if not in every respect reliable. The earliest form in which the name became known to Englishmen was that of "Penhuelgoit", so transferred into the popular English history from the Welsh "Bruts" by Geoffry of Monmouth. The other record, although most likely a much more ancient one, did not, in its own character, come under the notice of English writers until some five centuries later. This is the remarkable Catalogue of the principal Cities that existed in this island during, or even preceding, the dark interval between the retreat of the Romans and the subjugation by the Saxon invaders and colonizers. There is no reason to doubt that this catalogue is a genuine and

[1] See Hon. A. Herbert's Cyclops Christianus.

very ancient document: probably much older than the tract, which goes by the name of "Nennius", into which it has strayed, and in association with which it is often, but not always, found. Most likely it had been transcribed into some early manuscript, which also contained that work, as being connected with the subject, or as a useful topographical help to the reader. It contains the names in their indigenous British forms: and some names that survive, having been only partially altered by succeeding conquerors, have come down to us in such a state that they can be certainly recognized in this old catalogue. Thus we find "Cair ebrauc", the "Eboracum" of the Romans, the "Eoferwic" of the Saxons, and our "York": also "Cair gloui", our "Gloucester", and some others. Then, we have some which may be one of several known places; as "Cair guent", which may be "Caerwent", or "Winchester", or other "Venta". But there is a considerable unidentified residuum, that have become the legitimate prey of the more or less rank or prolific fancies of the philological antiquaries; and as even the most eminent and learned of these sometimes widely differ from each other, they are still open to a new appropriation, whenever a fresh ray of light happens to fall upon any of them. It need not be pointed out, that if this should now be the good fortune of that one of the names which, for so many centuries, has baffled the most assiduous endeavours to account for it; a great increase of credibility will be extended to the entire document.

Sir William Camden and Archbishop Usher, appear to have been the first who brought this catalogue into English notice as an authority for the names, and even the number, of the principal ancient British cities. It is found in many of the manu-

scripts which contain the so-called "Nennius", but not in all of them; and in those that have it, it is variously placed and circumstanced. Although Camden and Usher quote it as if it was a part of the work of "Ninnius", and most writers to this day still quote it as "Nennius", it is quite a separate document. It is generally at the end in manner of an appendix, but in some cases it has been interpolated into the descriptive part, near the beginning; the context being adapted to receive it:[1] whilst in another, although the catalogue is found at the end, it has been artfully tagged on to the text, with words that make it read on in continuation, and which seem to betray a consciousness in the scribe that the catalogue was more ancient than the text.[2] Many of the names can be appropriated at sight to surviving cities, or to cities otherwise known to have existed: but others have been great enigmas; and the guesses that have been ventured, by the most learned writers, at the local habitations that are meant to be indicated by some of them, might form a somewhat amusing chapter. Perhaps neither of these enigmas has been so attractive as the name which has now brought this record to our attention. The length and compound appearance may have offered particular encouragement to any attempts at solution; but it, as we have seen, has hitherto been one of the most obstinate in resisting them.

But it is not only by altering the context of Nennius that the catalogue has been adapted to it. In most cases the catalogue itself has been altered

[1] See Stevenson's Descr. of the MSS. Nennii H. Brit. 1838. pp. xxi-xxxii. Also his note 17 on p. 6. Mon. H. Brit. Pref. pp. 65-68. Sir T. D. Hardy's Materials, Vol. I. pp. 318-337.

[2] "—ut alii scriptores ante me scripsere, scripsi". Gale Scriptores XV. p. 115.

and tampered with in a manner not yet observed, or when observed not understood. Most of the copies of the catalogue contain twenty-eight names; a number which not only corresponds with the description of Britain in most copies of the text, but seems to accord with some general belief in that number current in those days; being that mentioned also by Gildas, and repeated by Bede. It is quite certain that Archbishop Usher considered that the true number; for his object in printing the list, with his examination and elaborate commentary, was to confirm the account of the number of Prelates in Britain, consisting of XXV Bishops and III Archbishops.[1] In his day no copies were known with more than twenty-eight names. But another copy of the Historia Britonum of the reputed Nennius, was discovered in the Vatican library by the Rev. W. Gunn, who published it in 1819. This has been pronounced by the later editor[2] to be, if not the earliest, one of the earliest manuscripts of the work, and of the first half of the tenth century. Besides other important variations, it contains a copy of the Catalogue of Cities with thirty-three names instead of twenty-eight.

But the bringing to light of this text of the Catalogue with the larger number of XXXIII names, has not hitherto supplanted the belief that those which contain only XXVIII are the original or genuine form of it; and that the larger number was obtained from it by a later tampering by addition. Among others the Hon. Algernon Herbert accounts for the difference by saying that, in this Vatican type of manuscript, the number XXXIII has been "effected by adding five names to the twenty-eight".[3] On the contrary it will presently be shewn

[1] Primordia, Dubl. 1639. p. 58, &c. [2] Stevenson Pref. p. xxx.
[3] Irish Nennius. Dubl. 1848. Notes, p. v.

that the difference has been really produced by suppressing some of the names of the larger list, and not by increasing the smaller one. That this was the true order of the change can not only be concisely demonstrated; but the simple manipulation of the scribe who did it, and the clumsy shuffle of the names by which he tried to conceal it, can, by a short method, be shewn up.

The various extant copies of the list of only twenty-eight names, shew repeated changes in the order of the names after the first reduction, but it is fortunately easy to refer to the earliest altered state, otherwise the detection of the contrivance would have been extremely difficult if not impossible. This first reduced list is the one printed by Mr. Stevenson.[1]

Taking this XXVIII-name list as Mr. Stevenson has printed it, from the Harleian MS. 3859, and comparing it with the Vatican XXXIII-name list,[2] the XXVIII-list is found to have been manufactured directly from some copy of the XXXIII-list which had the names in the same order of sequence as the Vatican copy, but which had four of the names written in each line across the page, making eight lines; and the thirty-third name turned over by itself into a ninth line. From this the entire eighth line of four names was then temporarily cancelled or held over, along with five more (Nos. III, IX, XIV, XV, and XXVIII) picked off from the other seven lines: making nine names, to be held over in reserve, out of which afterwards to select the five, necessary to be rejected in order to reduce the number to the desired twenty-eight. Then followed the chief disguise of the manœuvre. The remaining seven horizontal lines of four names were next treated as if they were four perpendicular columns.

[1] Nennius, 1838. p. 62. [2] Gunn's edn. 1819. pp. 3, 46.

The fourth of these columns was shifted bodily to the first place, by which the first column became the second, the second third, and the third fourth. These shifted columns (4th, 1st, 2nd, 3rd) were then retranscribed from top to bottom, and formed the first twenty-three out of the newly fabricated list of twenty-eight.[1] Four names were next selected from the reserved nine—chiefly from the original bottom line—and added on to the end of the new list, taking the places 24 to 27; and at last, the odd thirty-third name, which during the entire process had held its solitary place in the ninth line of the original list, until wanted for this special purpose, was added on as the twenty-eighth or last of the reconstructed list; apparently to avert suspicion by making the new list end with the same name as the old one.

[1] The Vatican copy, as published by Mr. Gunn is arranged below in eight lines of four names each, as, except the orthography which varies in all copies, it must have been in the manuscript used by the fabricator of the tenth century recoction printed by Mr. Stevenson. The Arabic numbers shew the new order then given to them. The five names ultimately rejected in the XXVIII-name list are in italics.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7<br>I. Cair ebrauc | 13<br>II. Cair ceint | III. *Cair gurcoc* | 1<br>IIII. Cair guor thegern |
| 8.<br>V. Cair gusteint | 14<br>VI. Cair guoranegon | 19<br>VII. Cair segeint | 2<br>VIII. Cair guin truis |
| IX. *Cair merdin* | 15<br>X. Cair peris | 20<br>XI. Cair lion | 3<br>XII. Cair mencipit |
| 9<br>XIII. Cair carataue | XIIII. *Cair ceri* | XV. *Cair glouí* | 4<br>XVI. Cair luilid |
| 10<br>XVII. Cair graut | 16<br>XVIII. Cair daun | 22<br>XVIIII. Cair britoc | 5<br>XX. Cair meguaid |
| 11<br>XXI. Cair mauiguid | 17<br>XXII. Cair ligion | 21<br>XXIII. Cair guent | 6<br>XXIIII. Cair collon |
| 12<br>XXV. Cair londcin | 18<br>XXVI. Cair guorcon | 23<br>XXVII. Cair lerion | 24<br>XXVIII. Cair drait hou |
| 25<br>XXVIIII. Cair pensauelcoin | XXX. *Cair teim* | 26<br>XXXI. Cair urnaho | 27<br>XXXII. Cair celemion |
| 28<br>XXXIII. Cair loit coit | | | |

No. XXVIIII "pensauel*coin*" instead of "*-coit*" is one of several orthographical evidences that the Vatican MS. had already passed through foreign transcription. Besides the other changes described above, it will also be seen that Nos. XIX (22) and XXIII (21) have changed places in the newer and manipulated list.

We have seen the success of this contrivance; for even down to this time the older and longer list has been still depreciated as a later and altered one, enlarged from the really refabricated one by interpolation. But if the reader has been so patient as to follow this detail of the fraud, the reversal of the process exposed will be seen to have been impossible. The XXXIII-name form of the list is therefore certainly the original and more ancient one.

It is also noteworthy that although the Vatican text, in which alone our XXXIII-name list is found, is acknowledged by Mr. Stevenson to be "one of the very earliest manuscripts, if not the very earliest, extant",[1] and that "the text which it furnishes is particularly valuable, and seems to transmit the work in a purer state than it occurs in any other manuscript",[2] yet it is comparatively a very late one of its own type. That the prefixes and the passages, which shew the date of the transcription to be A.D. 994, were then added and interpolated. There are also appearances in the orthography of the names that it had already undergone foreign transcription.[3] In this the list of cities, instead of being separate, as in most of the other copies which contain it, is interpolated into the middle of a sentence, split into two for its reception; and the mention of the number of the cities in the context is altered to XXXIII to adapt it to the actual number in this interpolated list; giving room for a presumption that this, which

[1] Nennius, 1838, Pref. p. xiii. Also, Hardy Materials, No. 815.

[2] p. xxx.

[3] The general accuracy of Mr. Gunn's transcript of the names from the Vatican MS. has been accidentally confirmed by another transcript inadvertently made under the authority of the Record Commission, without knowledge that it had already been published. The chief results of a collation of the two transcripts are printed in the Monumenta Hist. Brit. Preface. p. 68.

has been shewn to be the genuine and unaltered list, was a pre-existent independent document, to which even the integrity of the text must be compromised for its interpolation. In the other copies, as we have seen above, the list was itself artfully accommodated to the number XXVIII mentioned in the context. In these ordinary copies, the words are "In ea sunt viginti octo civitates, et innumerabilia promontaria". The Vatican copy reads "—et in ea XXXIII. Civitates" (then follows the catalogue of them, after which the sentence finishes) "et innumerabilia promontaria". The long catalogue, so placed, is obviously a foreign object, and a large one; an already full-grown intruder into a place, for which it was not purposely made, and which was not made for it. It is indeed a reminder of the awkward dilemma of the unhappy musculist, "wedged in the timber which he strove to rend".

The manuscript which Archbishop Usher adopted as the groundwork of his list,[1] is also of XXVIII names and must have been later than that of Mr. Stevenson; with which it agrees, except that the first name, "Cair Guorthigirn", has now been removed to the twelfth place, by which the second name, "Cair Guintguic", stands first, and the intermediates each gain one place accordingly.

A second cut-and-shuffle of the pack, or a recoction of the XXVIII-name list itself, must have been made by a repetition of the like process upon some copy of the first reduction which had two names in horizontal order on each line: and being retranscribed as if it had been two columns, every alternate name passes into the latter half of the list; thus the second name became the fifteenth, the fourth the sixteenth, and so on. This may have been done by

[1] Primordia, 1639. p. 59.

inadvertence and not by artifice, but at any rate indicates a later text. The list printed in Smith's Beda[1] is based on this second change: and is the same as that in the Monumenta Historica Britannica.[2] That in Gale's Scriptores XV[3] is also of this order, but obviously from a different manuscript, with some important variations.

The Irish version of Nennius, edited by Dr. J. Henthorn Todd and the Hon. A. Herbert,[4] also contains three copies of the Catalogue of Cities, printed from three manuscripts. This is of the XXVIII-name family, and substantially the same as that in the Latin copies, as printed by Mr. Stevenson, and must have been later than the text which he prints. There are however some slight displacements in the order of the names; but the names themselves are so distorted by the Irish translator, and the three Irish scribes, who seem to have confounded the Roman and Irish letters, that several of the names cannot be identified with those of the Latin originals. Dr. Todd says, "Most of these variations are doubtless attributable to error or ignorance in the transcribers". This is certainly the case with the name that we have been concerned with; for the last half of it has been transferred to the end of the adjoining name. It stands as "Pendsa", "Pensa", and "Pennsa", in the three Irish copies; whilst the next name, meant for the "Draitou" of the Latin copies, appears in the Irish ones as "Druithgolgod", "Gluteolcoit", and "Druithecolcoit". The Irish copies are among those which have the catalogue interpolated into the descriptive passage near the beginning of Nennius.

[1] Appendix III. p. 655. [2] p. 77. [3] p. 115.
[4] Irish Archæological Society, 1848, (No. 16.)

Henry of Huntingdon, or Alfred of Beverley copied by him, constructed another list of the "quondam" cities of Britain. He certainly had a copy of the larger or Vatican list, of XXXIII, before him, since he includes three of the five names that had been discarded for the ancient reduction to XXVIII. His list is however an entirely new redaction of it, and his method not so distinctly discernible as that of the older one: though, instead of being made from a copy in four columns, it was most likely made from one in two columns; as, in the course of it, three pairs of coincidents with the Vatican list occur, all of which have the odd number first—thus 1 and 2, 19 and 20, 21 and 22.[1] He has added two names not in either of the older lists, which would have made his number thirty-five, but by rejecting six he reduces it to twenty-nine: one more than he intended; for, shewing that he aimed at the old traditional number, he calls them "viginti-octo".[2]

The question which of the two older lists is the most ancient, or the genuine and original, might seem to have been indifferent in our chief present question. And so it is: only that if the XXVIII-name list, being itself of great antiquity, is, as we have seen only a sophistication of the other, a strong presumption is raised that the uncontaminated XXXIII-list may be of still much older date than either of them has been hitherto suspected to be. Its value to our inquiry,

[1] See Monumenta H. B. p. 692. Savile, Scriptores. p. 298.

[2] Other adaptations of this Catalogue of Cities, with additions or omissions: Thomas Rudborne (22 names) Anglia Sacra, I. 181. Robert of Gloucester (14), Higden Polychronicon, Eulogium Historiarum, II. 149, An old Welsh one (57 names) Archæol. Cambr. July 1853. p. 207. There is also one of 35 names, in a MS. translation of Select Triads by the late Sir S. R. Meyrick, of which about 20 can be identified with the 33-name catalogue.

as a witness of our name, becomes thereby enhanced. Mr. Herbert believes that because the XXVIII-name list begins with "Caer Guorthigirn", whilst the XXXIII-name one gives the first and second places to "Cair ebrauc" = York, and "Cair ceint" = Canterbury, that this was altered from the former by an Englishman in the interest of the two English primacies. But, since it has been demonstrated that the XXXIII is certainly the older one; if what he says proves anything, it proves that this one—although perhaps not quite as old as Stonehenge—dates from a time when Britain was not yet compressed into Cambrian limits, and that the difference between the two is not the result of interpolations by an Englishman, but of abstractions by a Welshman.

It appears then, that this Catalogue of Cities, although it has often—not always—been more or less intimately associated with the Nennian Historia Britonum, has come down from a very high antiquity by two independent traditions, into which it had already diverged at an earlier date than that of any of the extant copies of either. These may be broadly distinguished into, that text which contains the original unsophisticated catalogue of XXXIII names; and which, in its only known representative, has the Nennian sentence altered to that number to agree with the catalogue; and those in which the Nennian sentence has been unaltered, but the catalogue has been reduced to correspond with it. These differences of treatment, not only indicate an original independent existence, of the list of cities, from the Nennian text; but can scarcely be accounted for except by a long interval of editorial time and fortunes, even before the earliest existing copies. There can be little doubt, therefore, that, in its original unaltered form of XXXIII names, the catalogue

was a very ancient document, adopted by some scribes, either by interpolation as a detailed enlargement of the mere mention of the number of the cities in the text; or as a suitable appendix at the end of the treatise. Of this very process, the most accepted modern editing of this work itself, furnishes an exemplary illustration. The list of cities appears printed in Mr. Stevenson's edition, in 1838, as if it was a direct appendix belonging to the text. But it so happens that he was not the first who had printed the list from the same manuscript as he uses. In the Cambrian Quarterly Magazine,[1] Sir S. R. Meyrick had already printed from the same Harleian manuscript what he says is "The oldest Welsh document I know . . . . it consists of a few pages bound up in the middle of a volume . . . . Although but a fragment this Welsh portion is especially curious as a specimen of ancient orthography;". It appears to be a series of pedigrees of the Welsh Princes, containing together about four hundred names or degrees in one continued catalogue, that ends without discontinuance in this very catalogue of cities; which afterwards, in conformity with the order in which the appendages of the work he was editing are usually found, Mr. Stevenson has separated and printed at the end of it, without any indication that it was not so placed in the manuscript; instead of being, as it proves to be, a portion of an independent document bound into the same volume.

So that this question of the precedence of one or the other of these two catalogues of cities does not essentially concern the enquiry here in pursuit. The name with which we have to do is contained in both of them. We are however concerned for its antiquity as contributing to its authenticity. Besides, it is

[1] Vol. IV. p. 16. 1832.

thought that to have cleared this ancient topographical monument of any undeserved extrinsic suspicion, will, on its own account, not have been a barren success. From an internal point, it is hoped, that its testimony has here been strongly confirmed by the realization of that one of its names, which had lost its intelligence for so many centuries; and which had been perhaps the greatest of its intrinsic difficulties.

In truth, this ancient indigenous catalogue does not seem to have yet received that consideration which is due to it; neither from general historians, nor from those who have aimed at taking stock of the materials of our ancient topography. They have constantly ignored the existence of any place not mentioned in the Roman Itinera, supplemented by the Anonymous Ravennat, and confirmed by the finding of material relics of Roman occupation. For the bye-ways of modern travelling, Paterson's Road-Books have not been superseded by Railway-Guides: so also is this indigenous document of archaic geography not only independent of, but also complementary of, the military journey-books of the Imperial subjugators. Limited as these were to a special purpose, much of the internal country must have remained unnoted, which we can only hope to know from such national or vernacular monuments. Hitherto, the purview of our antiquaries has been habitually narrowed by a presumption that all British cities must have been *Roman*-British, as of course many of them were: and this prejudice has been what has hitherto prevented their realization of the example of an un-Romanized municipality now thought to be restored to light; although they have, one after another, approached so near to it as Ilchester. Whether it was, that this great city was

exterminated at an early period of the Roman occupation of the country, and so passed at once into oblivion, the Romans have left none of their well-known footsteps. There are remains of surrounding external defences; but they are the earthworks of the more ancient people. No everlasting masses of cemented boulders, as at Pevensey, Richborough, Bramber, Caerwent. No hard raised rectangular cross streetways, such as are dead witnesses at Dolbury, but still living ones at Chester, Worcester, Gloucester, and Exeter. As the railways now sweep round this forgotten place, without approaching it; so did the great highways of the Romans and their successors; and the place has neither a notice in their Itineraries nor traces of their occupation.

### TOTNAIS TOYNUS TALNAS

It would not be a wonder if an error which had been already established long before history was reduced to a system, and before it had been felt necessary to reconcile or harmonize its facts, and to connect all which could be connected, and discard all which could not; should during that un-critical period have drawn around it a circle of false connections and erroneous interpretations. The original or causal error, in the case in hand, can be easily accounted for. It first appeared in the Latin texts of Geoffrey, from which the name of this long lost city first became known to English writers, and this causal error passed to them along with the name itself. The name there appears as "Kaerpen-Huelgoit", and is for the first time followed by the

gloss "quæ Exonia vocatur".[1] This explanation of the name does not appear in the more ancient Welsh text of the chronicle usually called "Brut Tysilio" from which Geoffrey translated and diluted his own, and where the name appears as "caer benhoylgoet"; nor even in the later one with the printed heading "Brut Gr. ab Arthur", where it is "Kaer Pen Hwylcoyt".[2] The erroneous gloss had not yet been interpolated. In a third reading, however,[3] the explanation "Exon" does appear. But this third text is what is described by the editors (A.D. 1801) as from a manuscript then at Hafod, about 500 years old—that is, about A.D. 1300. But by that time the Latin Geoffrey had become a great authority;[4] and this interpolation had therefore been reflected back from his Latin into this third or later Welsh chronicle.[5]

It is quite certain that, if, in ascribing this name to Exeter, Geoffrey was recording a tradition surviving to his own time, it was a tradition of which he had a monopoly. His contemporaries certainly knew nothing of it. Henry of Huntingdon added to each name, as far as he could, either from tradition or fancied likeness, the name by which it was still known in his day, but retained some which he was unable so to explain. Now, the name Caer Pensauelcoit, although it is in both the more ancient

[1] Galf. Monem. Halle 1854. p. 57.

[2] Myvyvian Arch. Vol. II. 1801. p. 193.

[3] At foot of same page, ibidem.

[4] Sir T. D. Hardy describes 28 MSS. of the 12th century, and 29 of the 13th, as now extant in our public libraries only.

[5] The oldest of the Welsh Chronicles "Brut Tysilio", was translated, with some variations of the later ones, by the Rev. Peter Roberts, Chronicle of the Kings, 1811. 4to. But it has been necessary, for the points concerning names &c. here treated constantly to revert to the texts in the Myvyvian Archæology, Vol. II. 1801.

catalogues, is not admitted into his newly compiled one—neither among those which he has explained nor those which he has retained but could not explain; but is one of the six that he rejected altogether. It may therefore be asked, whether, if he had known that it stood for Exeter, he would not have preferred to reject one of the obscure names of perished and forgotten cities that he could not even realise, in order to give place to one which he well knew, and which was still famous and important beyond some of those which he retains and did know and explain?

But the erroneous gloss may not after all be chargeable upon Geoffrey himself. The words "quæ Exonia vocatur" have all the appearance of a marginal note, of a reader conceited of his own local knowledge, afterwards absorbed into the text by a transcriber: and what suggested such a note to such a reader is not far to seek.

The British narrative is to the effect that when Vespasian had been repulsed by Gweyrydd[1] from Rutupia by Thanet; he sailed to "Totnais" or "Totenysy", and marched directly to besiege Caer Penhuelcoyt—and here it is that the unhappy in-

[1] It will be observed that the name of the British General, "Gweyrydd", was altered by Geoffrey of Monmouth to "Arviragus". It is uncertain, whether he dreaded the refraction of his Latin by the Welsh name, or whether he mistook for him a British Prince called Arviragus who is said to have lived some fifty years after. Some have thought that Gweyrydd was another name of the personage better known as Caractacus; and he does, in the Welsh Chronicle of Kings, seem both to occupy the period, and to fulfil the position and circumstances otherwise attributed to Caractacus. The suppression of the name of Caractacus in the Chronicle, is however imputed by Mr. A. Herbert to the Sectarian influence that has been mentioned above. See Cyclops Christianus. p. 124.

terpolator adds his—" now called Exeter ", and after seven days' siege was overtaken by Gweyrydd, &c.

It will be seen that the misconception started in the mind of the interpolator was, that as Exeter was the only great city within march of a place well known to him in the twelfth century, as it is known to us in the nineteenth, as Totnes; Exeter must necessarily be the city intended by the obsolete, and to him—a reader of Geoffrey's Latin—foreign name. So he writes his shrewd guess into the margin, and the next scribe transfers it to the text.

And this " Totnais ", which led the old annotator so far astray, is not without some difficulties for us. It may be a question whether the Welsh chroniclers meant to call it by an ancient name contemporary with the fact; or whether they meant that it was a place that, in their own day, in which they were writing, had come to be called Totnais. In the former case the name must have been in a very depraved form, obviously English and post-British; and in either case, the place now so well known as Totnes cannot have been the one intended. In fact, this is not the only instance in which a place of this name is recorded by these ancient British writers; nor the only one in which it is mentioned with geographical attributes that are incongruous or impossible to the Totnes of our own acquaintance.

For one example: the length of the island of Britain current among the old chroniclers, was that it was eight hundred miles long measured " a totonesio litore "[1]—" frome the clyf of Totonesse "[2] —to the Caledonian angle, or Caithness. This is given by Higden quoting Solinus. But " Catenesse " is Trevisa's gloss when translating; and the words

[1] Higden, Keynsham MS. I. 40.
[2] Trevisa, Treveris, 1527. I. xli.

about Totones are of course not in Solinus, but perhaps added by Higden from Alured of Beverley, whom he next quotes for the breadth of the island; which he says is more than two hundred miles from Menevia or St. David's, the uttermost place in Wales, to Yarmouth in Norfolk. It is obvious that the straightest longitudinal line, even in the old maps with the eastward distortion, that could be made to pass through the island from Caithness, would strike the south coast near the Isle of Wight. Not to say, how unlikely that such a length-line would be made to include a repetition of a considerable part of the breadth, by a diversion to so unaccountable a termination as our Totnes.

Another instance is, that in the "Brut Tysilio" it is said that Prince Constantin landed at "Totnais in Loegria".[1] But the Totnes of our day would hardly have been so described, being in Damnonia. When again the sons of Constantin—Emrys and his brother—landed from Armorica with reinforcements of the revolt against Vortigern, it was again on the "shore of Totnes". And whatever may be the interpretation of the names of the places of the events that directly followed: whether the scene of them was Wilts and Hants, around Ambresbury—still perhaps marked by the name of Emrys—the centre of Vortigern's usurped general sovereignty; or in his legitimate sub-regal territory beyond the Severn; the Totnes known to us was far out of the way for either.

Once more; when Arthur is narrated to have defeated the Saxons in Lincolnshire, they sailed round from the east coast to the south coast, where they are said to have landed at Totnes,[2] and ravaged

[1] M. Arch. II. 223.

[2] "y borth Totnais" (B. Tys.)—"y draeth Totnes" B. G. Arth. (M. Arch. II. 304.) "Totonesium littus". (Galf. Mon.)

to the Severn and besieged Bath. Could this have been our western Totnes?

But the earliest and most famous of all these landings at Totnes; is that fabled of Brutus. This at least must have been the Totnes of the west, for there is still to be seen his first footprint upon the soil which he afterwards peopled, and which since that "carboniferous era" has hardened into limestone. Some have objected that, instead of being on the "shore," this footprint is a good way up in the main street of the town; but in that neighbourhood it is customary vicariously to honour the memorial of a spot, instead of the spot itself. In the neighbouring port of Brixham the first footstep of another Brutus, the Prince of Orange, had been outlined on the spot; but the stone itself, with the outline, has been lately removed to a more honoured place, where it is guarded with a handsome railing.

It is evident however that some place on the south coast, for which a name, that had ultimately shaped itself into "Totnais" or "Totonesy", was uppermost in the minds of the ancient British writers, as the most important landing place. It does not concern us whether all these recorded events are historical, or whether some or all of them are fabulous. There evidently was such a famous port, and it was not the present Totnes. This name in the borough records, was almost always written "Totteneys"; and the descriptive suffix instead of being "-ness", from which some have inferred that at an early time the sea was nearer than now; refers to its situation, as at present, where the Dart is divided into several streams by small islands or "-eys". The root of the name has been referred to a Saxon or English clan or tribe called "Tottingas". But if so they must have been a large and discursive

colony, for they are found in nearly all parts of the land. There is Tottenhall or Tottenham in Middlesex, Tooting in Surrey, Tottenhall Shropshire Tottesbury or Tutbury Stafford, Tattenhall and Tetton Cheshire, Totenhoe Bucks, Totnore Sussex, Tottenhill Norfolk, and many more. Indeed there is a Totton almost where we want it; at the very place where the river Test or Anton widens into Southampton Harbour.

But there are not wanting in the Welsh Chronicles or Bruts, even as printed, some indications of earlier forms of the name of this favourite British port, that has got to be thus confounded with Totnes. In the notice already referred to, of the coming of the sons of Constantin to Britain against Vortigern, the text "Brut G. ab Arthur," supposed to be the second in antiquity, reads for, the "shore of Totnes", "y draeth Toynus", where the third or Hafod one has "y traeth twtneis".[1] The most significant one, however, is, what must be looked upon as the very earliest of all the mentions of the port, the fabled narrative of the landing of Brutus in the oldest of the texts, being that printed with the title "Brut Tysilio". In this the place appears as "draeth talnas". But in the corresponding passage of the later "Brut Gr. ab Arthur" it had become "traeth Totonys":[2] and in Geoffrey of course it is "in Totonesio littore". Talnas, therefore, is the very earliest form in which the name appears;[3] a strong confirmation of our suspicion that the usual name has only been the result of corruption.

But the local features of the natural situation of the present Totnes, answer no better than its geographical

[1] Myv. A. Vol. II. p. 268. [2] Myv. Arch. Vol. II. p. 114.

[3] This name "Talnas", will be again referred to in a later section.

place, to the terms of the ancient legendary landings. In nearly all of these the place is described by the word "littus", a word unlikely to have been used for the bank of a narrow land-locked river, remote from the sea. And this is understood to be still more explicit in "traeth" = a sandy beach, the most frequent descriptive prefix in the Welsh Bruts, although several times they call it "Porth".

It appears then that the mention, in the "Bruts", of Totnes as the landing place of Vespasian, which caused the long lived mistake of placing Pensauelcoit at Exeter, and thereby making the narrative itself incredible; was itself a mistake or mistranscription. If, by this failure of help from the name, we should be left to choose, from a consideration of all the other circumstances—the geographical likelihood, and the harmonized narratives — the Roman or extraneous and the British or indigenous — the place on the coast by which the Roman General approached Caer Pensauelcoit from his head quarters in Wight; we are recalled, by the natural topography, to Christchurch harbour, the outlet of the Stour itself. The advanced lip of this sound again fails to help us by its name, "Hengistbury Head":[1] in which a later invader has perhaps displaced by his own, some antecedent name. But earthworks of greater antiquity, still shew that another had occupied this commanding height before him: and its long gently curved continuation of dwarfed cliffs and golden beach, extending seven or eight miles westward, would amply justify both the persistent "littus" and the "traeth" of the ancient port.

[1] It is remarkable that the name of Hengist remains also at Henstridge ("Hengesteshricg" Cod. Dip. No. 374. 455. 1002.) higher up on the Stour, not many miles below its source at Caer Pensauelcoit.

Reverting to the incident already cited from the Welsh Chronicles, of the landing of the Saxons, sailing from Lincolnshire, at the port which has been called Totnais. If, as most likely, this was the descent recorded in the Saxon Chronicle, A.D. 514; Christchurch, and not, as Dr. Guest says, the Hamble, near Southampton, would then be where Cerdic had landed A.D. 495, and which had on that account already been renamed "Cerdices-ora" by the invaders. This derives confirmation from its being the junction of the Stour with the Avon; higher up upon which latter river is situated Charford the reputed "Cerdicesford", of the battle of A.D. 508.[1] Cerdices-ora has since given place, successively, to the names Tweoxnam and Christchurch; but this early change of the name by the intruders, may help to account for the uncertainty of the port that is meant by the name in the Welsh histories.

### ÆT PEONNUM

But the misfortune which befell the ancient name of Caer Pensauelcoit at an early period of historical science, or perhaps earlier than it can properly be called science, of being so totally mistaken and misplaced; and by which it has been for so many centuries swallowed up in blind oblivion; has drawn after it a train of errors, of another kind. It has not only thereby been severed from its own place in history, but the material phenomena of its surface, which its own history would so much more amply have accounted for, have tempted to it erroneous

[1] It is found that Mr. Pearson had already suggested "(?) Hengistbury Head" as Cerdices ora. (Hist. Maps. p. 31.)

attributes of other famous events with which it was not concerned. No less than three celebrated and even decisive battles, in two very distant ages (A.D. 658-1001-1016) have been erroneously placed to its credit. These three events are thus narrated in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles; and by the majority of both local and national historians are interpreted as being told of this Penselwood, and as possibly accounting for the extensive traces of its ancient occupation and defence.

"An. DC.LVIII. In this year Cenwalh fought æt Peonnum with the Wealas (Britons), and made them fly as far as Pedrida (the river Parret)".

"An. M.I". .... (The Saxons of Devon and Somerset assembled "æt Peonnhó", and the Danes fought them and burnt the "ham æt Peonhó", and [Broad] Clist.)

"An. M.XVI ..... Eadmund ætheling ..... fought with the army (of Canute) æt Peonnan by Gillingaham".

Even the second of these three records was formerly always given to Penselwood, but has, within the present century, been indisputably surrendered to Pinhoe[1] in Devonshire: although Sir

[1] Etymological vagaries have still followed this name to its own proper home, and will not let it sleep. One writer makes "Pinhoe" to be the equivalent of "Pine Hill". (Etymology of Local Names, by R. Morris, 1857.) But, spite of the change of venue, the old indictment, that it is a debased Saxon offspring of the British "Pen-", is still prosecuted. By a gratuitous innovation, which is scorned even by those notorious repealers and corruptors of place-names, the Post-office and the Railway; this place is by a living writer persistently changed to the unheard of form of "Penhow": who even suggests, in support of his perversion, the very blunder of Geoffrey of Monmouth that has been above detected. (See Macmillan's Mag. Sept. 1873. p. 413. History of the Norman Conquest, *passim*. Old English History. p. 211).

Protests against this corruption are all the more necessary

R. C. Hoare himself persisted in claiming it for Penselwood.[1] With regard to the other two, however, the modern interpreters still almost unanimously place the events recorded at Penselwood. They may be right that the events of A.D. 658 and 1016 both happened at one place; but when they say that the place named "Peon" or "Peonna", was that now called "Penselwood", or any other "Pen" whatever, there is reason to believe that they are only making a short path out of a difficulty, by means of the sort of superficial similitude, that is only likely to be accepted by that great majority, who are accustomed to receive authorized statements for ascertained facts.

No one can doubt that the "Gillingaham" of the later annal—the fight of Edmund Ironside—is the Gillingham of our own time, and Penselwood is near to it. But so also are many other Pens. A misapprehension of this sort will indeed be usually found baited with a striking circumstantial likeli-

because it is made by a writer, whose extensive, and always ready, and forcibly applied learning, — generally employed not only in the earnest reprobation of the obliterators of antiquarian monuments, but in the fearless vindication of humanity both towards oppressed peoples and helpless brutes—has gained the hearing of the public, and is likely to obtain for him acceptance as an authority in time to come.

This name, Peonho, at this place, is highly significant. It is only separated from the eastern side of Exeter by a place with the Teutonic sounding name of Polsloe, and a suburb called St. Sidwell; which last is the name of a Saxon Saint murdered there A.D. 740. This whole group of Saxon names being evidence of a very early Teutonic colony, occupying the portion of hill country which lies to the east of Exeter, at a time when the Saxon political subjugation had not yet reached so far westward. The persistently printing the name as "Penhow", is no other than an attempt to subvert the testimony of the name to this very curious ethnical fact.

[1] Anc. Wilts, I. pp. 34-5.

hood of some kind, which at a closer view turns out to have been the sole cause of the error. But the retreat of the Britons from Kenwalch, to the Parrett, in A.D. 658, does not, if the fight was at Penselwood, so aptly fulfil the conditions of probability. The Rev. William Barnes[1] was so sensible of the unsuitableness of this route of the flight, that he was even induced to substitute Pendomer, although it is some twenty miles to the south-west of Penselwood, as offering a more likely path of the fugitive Britons to the Parrett.

But if the name "Pen" had been all that was wanted, there are few parts of Britain that would not have yielded a plentiful choice, either by itself or variously qualified by suffixes. In the neighbourhood here concerned—the tract between Gillingham and the Peddar or Parrett—this name literally swarms. In such forms as "Penhill" and "Penmill" it turns up over and over again, and otherwise varied without number.

The truth is however that there is no more connection between the name "Pen" and the "Peon" or "Peonna" of the Chronicles, than there is between the words "man" and "moon" and anyone can instantly estimate the value of any inference that might be solely founded upon an assumed philological identity of these two words. It is pretty certain that, if the place named in the Chronicles should ever be ascertained, it will not turn out to be any that has come down to us as a "Pen".

The great multitude of examples of the unchanged name "Pen" that still remain is enough to show that it was not the custom of the Teutonic intruders to change the short "e", which they found in this

[1] Grammar of Dorset Dialect, 1863. p. 5.

name-element, into a long one; nor into a diphthong. We find them writing "Penwithsteort" for the Land's End;[1] "Pennard" Somerset;[2] "Penpau" now Penpole, Glouc.;[3] and in many other like instances. On the other hand, their own diphthong, when it did exist, is so persistent; that among ourselves, who have inherited their speech, it is almost universally preserved either in our utterance or our writing: mostly in both. This is witnessed by the Anglo-Saxon dictionaries in such words as beo = our bee, deop = deep, deor = deer, deor = dear, feo = fee, heop = heap, meolc = milk—for our "i" is in effect a diphthong—, meolo = meal, neod = need, neothe = neath, weoc = week, weod = weed, theof = thief, and many more; words it will be observed of great wear and tear, but in which the archaic "eo" is still effectively represented. The truth indeed is, that among the many tendencies to permutation, the diphthong is exceptionally constant. The most rigid consonants must obey their innumerable laws of change, or be ejected as obstructives. Like the paradox of poets and geologists, about the mutability of the land and the permanence of the sea, the most prominent consonants are bent, broken, or rubbed down, by the organism of utterance, whilst the diphthong still traditionally "rolls on" in our mouths, even when in writing it has shrunk into a single vowel. And this is only what might have been expected from the substantial office of the diphthong in the Teutonic dialects. It is impossible to think that the English speakers of Anglo-Saxon times, were careless of so essential an agent of those interior inflections, that are not even yet obsolete among ourselves.

[1] A. S. Chron. A.D. 997 and 1052.

[2] Hearne Jo. Glaston. p. 97. Cod. Dip. *passim*. [3] C. D. 313.

And the particular case now under consideration, offers a broader front to the test here suggested than is often possible in questions of this nature. It has been shewn that the ante-Saxon name of this place was *Pen*-sauelcoit. If the Saxons did, contrary to their usual treatment of the British "Pen", alter the short vowel to a long diphthong, and persist in that alteration from A.D. 658 to 1016; how does it come to pass that we, who still speak their language, and who are by that theory, presumed to have actually forgotten, for many centuries, the ancient Celtic name; should nevertheless have restored the ancient short vowel? Should have renovated a tradition, of a foreign language and people, which in the case proposed had been suspended, or rather actually obliterated, certainly for more than three hundred and fifty years? Besides, the testimony of the Domesday Commissioners to the existence of the single vowel in the immediately post-Saxon condition of the name has a right to be considered. They were loose orthographers but seldom grudged a diphthong when it came to them ready made; but they emphasize the vocal report of the indigenes by a double "nn". In this, the original returns of their own neighbours in the Exeter Domesday, and the Exchequer redactors, agree. This indeed would require two improbabilities instead of one. First, the ancient change from right to wrong; and next, the later change back again, by those who did not know they were thereby making wrong right.

Among those who have apparently accepted Penselwood as the place of the battle recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles under A.D. 658, is the skilful topographer of early English history, Dr. Guest. He has preferred to translate the "æt Peonnum" of the Chronicle as a name in the plural number, "at

the Pens";[1] after the analogy perhaps of "Athenæ", "The Devizes", &c. It will also be observed that the later annal, A.D. 1016, has the varied form "æt Peonnan". It does not concern our purpose to determine how far this plural form is justified; or how far the grammatical efficiency of the desinence may be qualified by an observation of the Rev. Mr. Earle[2] of the scriptorial tendency of different periods to the use of "-an" for "-um". If however the Anglo-Saxon "Peonna" should really be a plural name, the likelihood is still the more distant that it is the equivalent of "Pen" in Pensauelcoit; for it is most unlikely that a name which, as we have seen, was found by the invaders in a singular form, should have been made plural by them. And if this unlikelihood should not be enough, a still greater one is left to be accounted for; that we, the inheritors of their speech, should have reconverted it back to its ancient forgotten but correct singular form. This would convert the two improbabilities, already noted, into four.

If therefore any representative of the "æt Peonnan" of A.D. 658 or A.D. 1016 should now exist, it must not be looked for at Pen Selwood, nor at any "Pen". Whatever may have been its origin or meaning "Peon-" is certainly of Teutonic nationality and quite unrelated to the Celtic "Pen-"; and has itself formed an ingredient of many English place-names, and these broadly scattered over the land. We have already seen another example from the Chronicles in "Peonhó"; still living, scarcely altered in "Pinhoe", and spoken "Peenhoe" by the unlettered natives.[3] Also in a charter of Athelstan,

[1] Arch. Journal. Vol. XVI. 1859. pp. 108-9.

[2] Two Chronicles, Introd. XXVI.

[3] See Notes and Queries, 4th S. X. p. 102.

granting Culmstock, a few miles to the north of the same place, to the monastery of Exeter, "Peonmynet" is one of the boundaries.[1] In Worcestershire, "Peonedoc" appears in three charters;[2] and although this place is now written "Pendock", it remained "Penedoc" in Domesday,[3] and so it continued in the time of Edw. I.[4] and later. Modern "Pyon" Herefordshire was both "Pevne"[5] and "Pionie"[6] in Domesday, and in the last century had the popular alias of "Pewen".[7] Present "Poynton" Salop is the "Peventone" of Domesday.[8] So, also, Pevington Kent, is Piventone of Domesday;[9] and Pevenashe Kent, has had for synonym Poynyshe.[10] "Pevensey" itself most likely belongs to this class; "Poynings" Sussex, and most names in "Peving-" and "Pewen-". Another member of this family of names of English places is "Poinington"—for so the natives persist in calling it, although it has got into books and maps as "Pointington"—and this last is the name to which it is the object of the present observations to direct particular attention.

## POINTINGTON DOWN

The high range of hills, between Somerset and Wilts, which we have been considering, and of which Penselwood is the southern terminus; is supplemented, or continued towards the south-west, by another lofty range, called by Leland[11] "great

[1] Cod. Dip. No. 373. [2] C. D. No. 308. 514. 538.
[3] Twice, 173a, 174b. [4] Nash's Worc. Vol. I. p. 130. II. p. 241.
[5] 182a. [6] 184b. [7] Liber Regis. 1786. p. 362. [8] 259b.
[9] 10b. [10] Hasted. II. p. 192. [11] Itin. II. 46.

Crestes of Hylles", a similar natural rampart between Somerset and Dorset, the boundary of which counties is crossed in the short journey from Yeovil to Sherborne. On the Dorsetshire, or south-eastern side, this range commands views over the Vale of Blackmore; as also does Penselwood, but from the north towards the south; and both lines of view look over Gillingham, which, a little indirectly, lies between them in the lower country. On the other side, the steep north-western escarpment or outcrop looks down upon that one of the extensive Somersetshire levels in which occurs the junction of the Ivel with the Parrett. Beyond the northern ending of this western escarpment, about equal to it in height, but insulated in advance of it, stands out, like a sentinel upon the deep combes and valleys of the range, the hill and castle of Camelot or Cadbury. This block of high country, as already said, was most likely included in Selwoodshire. Sherborne, Milborne-Port, Charleton Horethorne, and several considerable places, nestle in the deep valleys that intersect it; and in these are also the sources of several streams that afterwards become considerable. One of these, the Yeo or Ivel, takes its rise in seven springs, at a place called "The Seven Wells", or "The Seven Sisters", a secluded spot at the top of the small valley in which, scarcely three miles lower, lies Sherborne: with its Norman castle, apparently occupying the earthworks of a strong fortress that had previously commanded the widened junction with another valley.

From this deep and narrow interior valley, close to the Seven Sisters, arises a large, nearly quadrangular platform, sloping upwards until it is terminated westward by the lofty and precipitous escarpment itself, commanding an extensive prospect over the

Somersetshire plain, and overlooking Ilchester and the Fosse-way. This is "Poinington" or "Pointington-down". The village of Pointington lies above a mile lower down the valley towards Sherborne. The quadrangular down retains some marks of having been, to some extent, artificially levelled; and there are slight remains of earthworks about it, and appearances of the edges having been declivitated and the angles squared; although these are not so conspicuous as to attract uninvited attention, nor more so than such as are frequent and generally unnoticed on many of our uncultivated downs. But none but extemporised works are expected by our theory. There are however four or five barrows, more or less flattened, on a steeper slope called Pointington Slait, separated from the down by a small stream and ravine on the north side. The view from the western or highest edge of the squared platform, over the broad level of southern Somerset, includes the entire field of the retreat to the Parrett; which—perhaps where the valley narrows again, by Langport, into a sort of land gate, through which the river passes—would be the next tenable natural boundary.

The western outcrop of Pointington Down, although steep and very high, is rather lower than the hills that flank it; and there is at one part a much easier descent to the lower country than is the general habit of this precipitous range. Holway Hill to the south and Corton Down to the north, form cheeks to this down, and to this descent from it.

Out of this name "Pointington" Mr. Kemble has "inferred" an ancient name "Puntingas", which he proposes as the possible name of the original settlement, or as he calls it "the Mark".[1] With deference it is thought that his reduction of the

[1] Sax. in E. Vol. I. p. 471.

modern "point-" to an ancient form "punt-" is at the least very unlikely. He gives no indication of the process of his inference, and that the latin "punctum" equals English "point" is totally irrelevant. But if after all the Chronicle name should be "Peonnan", in the plural, it may deserve some speculation in connection with the "-ing-" in "Poining-" of the present name. The "-ton" has of course since accrued to the name of the down from that of the village, by a popular hankering after uniformity often observed in action.

This seclusion might have been penetrated from Gillingham, or the east, by a pass a little to the south of Charleton Horethorne, through which it may now be approached from the Temple-Combe railway junction. But the part of the eastern side of the valley opposite the down or platform is closed by a long steep declivity,[1] a most formidable position if it should have been attained by a force advancing from that side. And such an advance would have been easy by a line of way, nearly the same as that which has been adopted by the South-Western Railway: but about a mile to the rear of this position, at Milborne Week, and close to the railway station, is the very remarkable earthwork which the late Rev. F. Warre,[2] has described, but despaired to account for, as "a very puzzling construction". It is however no more than an artificial dyke of rather unusual magnitude crossing a hill promontory, and insulating a considerable level platform; evidently with particular provision against an advance from the east. The inclosed area is surrounded on the other sides by a slender entrenchment, which is chiefly strengthened by the natural steepness and height of

[1] Marked "Pointington Hill" in the Ordnance Survey.
[2] Som. Archæol. Soc. Vol. VII. p. 60.

the hill. The bank consists of a core of heaped stones, with a thick covering of earth and turf, and almost rivals some of the finer samples of the Wansdyke; but if, as looks likely, there was an external ditch eastward of the bank, it has been nearly levelled. It was evidently intended for a like purpose with many such transverse dykes, such as at Maes Knoll near Bristol, Broadhembury Devon, Devil's Dyke and Telscombe Tye Sussex; to insulate a hill-promontory; but it must be admitted that the work here seems to have remained sharper—the edges not so rounded nor the slopes so curved by as much overgrowth or weather as in other examples: in fact it looks to be newer. The line is very true and, except the central opening or gate, the insulation is complete.

There can be no doubt that this is a hill fortress or camp of that type which consists of a promontory separated from a main land of equal height by an artificial vallum. Whether or not it is a continued usage of this ancient type, adapted to the later emergency of the resistance to the Saxon invaders of the seventh century may be a curious consideration. In one respect it differs from the better known examples: that whereas they are mostly found to command a wide outlook of forty or fifty miles; this although the spot itself is very high, is almost shut in within a scope of at most four or five. It seems therefore to have been specially intended to bar this direct passage of the hilly fastness, which is here suggested to have been the last holdfast of the Britons before their recorded westward flight A.D. 658. At all events, there it stands, across the most accessible way from Gillingham to our adopted "æt Peonnum" or Pointington Down.

It may not add much to the value of what has now

been said upon this part of the enquiry; but, on looking over the ground at Pointington Down, this already formed theory was unexpectedly confirmed by a shadow of local tradition. A Saxon saxifrax, holding his solitary session upon the spot, being asked how the appearances of ancient engineering were accounted for by old residents, protested that they were there before he could mind: back in the war-times, when our English[1] drove out some other nation away into foreign parts. There is one weak point in the evidence of such traditions, that they are not labelled with the date from which they have run, and may possibly be garden flowers growing wild, or the thistledown seedlings of learned theories. This however is not so likely to be the defect of this tradition, because although the village of Pointington, lower down the valley, being a place of some historical consequence, has attracted much of the attention of the county historians, the Down and its features have never been noticed; and the Somersetshire Archæological Society minutely explored the immediate neighbourhood, some two or three years since, without any note whatever concerning this very remarkable spot.

It is hoped that what is called the philological evidence for this place has here been satisfied. In the present name "Poinington" the diphthong of the ancient "Peonnan" survives in that undiminished vigour, which ought in such cases to be always expected, against the pretensions of any of the "Pens" that are so conveniently numerous and everywhere at hand. As to the geographical fitness

[1] How the cerevisio-vitrine triobolus, with which such communications are expected to end, would at this word, have leaped in the pocket of a hater of the phrase "Anglo-Saxon". But perhaps he ought to have said "our ancestors".

of the site of this platform for the two battles recorded in the Chronicles, it is not necessary that both the annals—of the seventh and the eleventh centuries—refer to one place, but it is most likely that they do; and it suits the requirements of both. Its superior aptitude for the last strong holdfast of the Britons upon this hilly region, and the flight and pursuit by Kenwalch to the Parrett, is very obvious. As for the fight of Edmund with the Danes, A.D. 1016, at Peonnan near Gillingham, this plain is ten miles west of Gillingham; and as Penselwood is only five miles north of it, we must trust to the diphthong reason for a preference of the ten miles. Pendomer is quite out of the question, being above twenty miles from Gillingham. Along the plain west of the escarpment of Pointington then, as now, ran the Fosse-Way, the direct and only road by which Edmund could lead the "Dorsetenses, Domnani, Wiltonienses",[1] to the place of his next following engagement, the famous drawn battle at Sceorstan, where it appears his army still consisted of these three peoples. No matter whether "Sceorstan" be now represented by Sherston near Malmesbury, or the Four-Shire-Stone near Chipping-Norton, for the road passes close to both. This great highway was perhaps, in those days, almost as good, as when, of later years, the fast coach "Hirondelle" skimmed over it, and earned the box-seat nickname of "the Iron Devil".

That Kenwalch penetrated Somersetshire, A.D. 658, by this southern entrance, at Pointington, and not by the more northern one at Penselwood, is further confirmed by one of his footsteps, left in this very path. The first record of the church of Sherborne, almost adjoining to this battle-field, upon which he

[1] Florence Wig.

won a large extension of his dominion from the Britons, is that Kenwalch was the first founder of that church, and gave it a hundred hides at a place called "Lanprobi".[1] It does not matter to our argument what may be the cartular authenticity of this record. It is sufficient that it attests a very ancient belief that Kenwalch, with the zeal of a convert, had a special interest in this spot, and that he exercised the well known instinct of conquerors to mark the scene of his victory by a religious memorial. Of this motive, Battle Abbey will be remembered as a later instance. But although this place Lanprobus is no longer known by that name, there is some reason to believe it was close to the battle-field. In the record above cited it first appears with its unaltered British name, and must have had a sanctuary dedicated in the name of St. Probus, as Cornwall still has one. But in a Papal Confirmation of the Terrier of Sherborne Abbey, dated 1145[2] this name turns up again in the more English form of "Propeschirche". It there follows the names of Higher and Lower and a third Compton, which are all still situated on those very western slopes of the great crest of hills, whereon our proposal is that the battle of A.D. 658 was fought.

Another presumption that the "æt Peonnum", from which the Britons were driven A.D. 658, indicates the same field as that of the defeat of the Danes A.D. 1016, "æt Peonnan with Gillingahám", may be given. Although Gillingham is not mentioned in the first annal, it was without doubt the basis of assault of the invaders in that case also. When mentioned in the second event, the name had already suffered the mutilation with which it is still current

[1] Mon. Angl. Num. I.

[2] Printed by Hearne Leland's Itin. II. p. 54. Mon. A. No. V.

among us, and in which that remarkable testimony which is contained in the name to nearly the exact date of its own beginning is obscured or nearly obliterated. The compilers of the Exchequer Domesday are answerable for many distortions of English names, but here they have compensated a multitude of their shortcomings by having—inadvertently, as it almost seems, for it is only once in seven entries of the name,—preserved the name in something like its entireness — "*INGELINGEHĀ*". The needful transliteration of this from Norman back to Saxon—"Engelingaham"—is very small, but very obvious. The other six entries of the name are spelled in the same way except that the first two letters are dropped. The entry,[1] which preserves this precious initial is unfortunately one of those Dorsetshire entries of which the prototypes are not found in the Exon Domesday, so that it rests entirely on the presumption that it was truly copied by the royal redactor. Although, therefore, this significant portion of this ancient name had already fallen out of vernacular written usage when the Saxon annal of A.D. 1016 was recorded, yet there can be no doubt that the Norman Domesday Commissioners caught it from the mouth of one of the local jurats, and so have given us this one single survival of the complete name. The wear and tear of centuries seems to be specially destructive of "In-" as the initial syllable of such names, for the place now called "Gilling", near Richmond, Yorkshire, was called "Ingetlingum" by V. Bæda; although K. Ælfred translates it "Ongetlingum".

Our concern with this restitution of the decayed intelligence of this name is, that at some time in the century between the conquest of Sarum A.D. 552, and

[1] Fol. 77b.

A.D. 658, when the Saxons pierced the hilly phalanx of South Selwood into South Somerset, there was a settlement of them—the Englings—upon the holm or "ham" formed by the confluence of a stream, now known as Shreen Water, with the Stour; and called, as an advanced frontier outpost of them, by the distinctive name of their nation—the Ham of the English. Dr. Guest, with his usual sagacity, felt the want of such a frontier, but was attracted by the neighbouring name of "Mere". But when Mere is not the equivalent of "more" or "marsh", as it is at Mere—formerly Ferlingamere—near Glastonbury, it will usually prove to be the almost technical name for a forest boundary.[1] And this one is probably so named as a mere of Selwood. What has since been called Mere Castle, with Whitesheet and the other surrounding hill forts,—perhaps including the outworks of Caer Pensauelcoit itself, already most probably desolate—were likely to have been the British outposts which checked the progress of invasion, and maintained this great natural rampart for another hundred years.

But there is still another word, concerning the retreat of the Britons, to the river Parrett, from this first inroad of the West Saxons into Somersetshire; as well as for the fact, that this was indeed the first military or dominant penetration of the West Selwood country, by that nation. It has been usual to interpret the annal of the year 658 of the Chronicles, as the establishment of the course of the Parrett for the subsequent strict boundary of the two nations. And this interpretation has been employed to explain the great and obvious difference of the two English dialects of North, and of South-West Somerset; more likely due to slower, or at least more natural

[1] Manwood, ch. VII.

causes than to such a distinct and artificial political division. No one can have passed through Somersetshire, without having noticed its most striking physical feature; the division, into long and wide level valleys, by continuous lines of mountainous hills, running from west to east. Like water-tight compartments in ships, these broad valleys are, in a manner, invasion-proof. That is, an inroad, which has penetrated one of them, must be repeated before it can be extended to the others. If the battle of A.D. 658 was fought at Pointington, the more southerly field, as above maintained; the consequent entry into what to us is Somersetshire, would have been into that very compartment in which alone the flight to the Parrett was possible: the plain within which the Ivel falls into that river. If the invasion had, on the contrary, been made at Penselwood, the more northern field of conflict, as heretofore presumed; the entry would have resulted in the valley of the Brue: and the Parrett could not have been reached nearer than its mouth: or rather it could not have been reached at all; for it is not outside probability, that Huntspill level, through which the river's mouth now winds, was at that time a wide bay of the sea itself. Again, that the course of the Parrett should then have been established as a political boundary is most unlikely, for the *line* of that river neither divides the dialects, nor takes the required direction. What the annal must have meant is, that the fugitive nation was pursued to the Parrett, at the point in that valley where it would lie in their path—the junction of the Ivel with the Parrett flowing from the south, at Langport; and to the narrow gorge through which the united river almost immediately passes out. A resting place which they maintained, until, some

fifty years afterwards, the West-Saxon frontier was pushed farther westward. It may here be worth noting that a religious observance, that was no doubt a tradition of this conquest, continued into the twelfth century. The isle of Athelney, so famous at a later date, stands just at the mouth of this landgate: and William of Malmesbury [1] narrates, that the poor monks, who still lived there, continued to sing the praises of their patron Saint Eielwini, who was also at that time still considered to be the brother of King Kenwalch. At a later time, however, Kenwalch, the invader of A.D. 658, is himself found, in a more pacific character, endowing the famous monastery of Glastonbury.[2] In this we see him in the very act of extending his former victory, by more conciliatory arts of conquest, over his British fellow Christians of the adjoining valley northwards. And it was then that Glastonbury first had an English Abbot.

The difference of the surviving dialects, of the north and of the south-west natural divisions of Somerset, is so marked as to strike even the dullest and most unpractised ear. But an acute, skilled, and cultivated one has taught us, that the Parrett is not the boundary of this difference of speech.[3] Indeed they could scarcely have both entered the county by

[1] Gesta Pontif. Lib. II.

[2] Jo. Glaston. Hearne. p. 89. Mon. Angl. To Kenwalch belongs the honour, usually attributed to one of his descendants in the sixteenth century, of being the first king who enjoined the administration of the Liturgy in the English speech. Beda, lib. III. c. 7. cited by Wharton, Angl. Sac. I. p. 191.

[3] The dialect of West Som. by F. T. Elworthy, 1875, p. 6. The present subject of enquiry might be greatly promoted, if this gentleman, with the Ordnance sheets in hand, and several coloured crayons, would cross the county in sections, and mark by dots of different colours upon the map, the spots where he should detect any distinct traces of the dialects.

the same channel, and with no other distinction than the interval of fifty years. Without the quickness of ear necessary to a critical judgment, it is possible to be convinced that the speech of North Somerset must have approached by a more remote circuit; must have flowed in, from Gloucestershire or Wiltshire, by a different entrance.

## HAGIOGRAPHY OF NORTH SOMERSET

There is in truth more than one reason to believe that the large north part of Somersetshire, claimed as a portion of the earlier and pagan conquest in Gloucestershire, was not included in it. The usual leading authorities, such as Mr. Sharon Turner, had already been accustomed to conclude that this earlier conquest included a "part of Somerset"; probably because one of the three cities named—Gloucester, Cirencester, and Bath,—as having been captured, is included in the Somersetshire of our day. But at a still later time Bath was in the kingdom of Mercia;[1] and not in Wessex, out of which the bulk of modern Somerset has come. This misapprehension has been much exaggerated by living writers, who have interpreted and mapped[2] the grasp of the earlier conquest as including—all but a long and narrow, not to say a most anomalous and exceptional, strip—not

[1] Bath contained one of the dedications of St. Werburgh, found to be a land-mark of the early frontiers and conquests of Mercia. The north bank of the Avon was lined with them, as this at Bath, one at Bristol, and one at Henbury.

[2] Dr. Guest, Arch. Journal, v. XIV. p. 105. Freeman Map of Britain in the 7th century in Old English History.

only all South Gloucestershire, but the very large part of Somerset extending to the river Axe. Thus it is represented, that a conquest which having crossed the Avon and passed the Wansdyke; although it was unable to appropriate the long, narrow, and comparatively easy barrier of North Selwood,—dividing it from its own territory eastward—was yet able to include, in one lot, the mountainous fastnesses of the Mendips—not to be conquered by saying so—only to be stopped by a small river to the south of them. This extension does not however seem to be very strongly suggested by the line of the four places named in the annal of the conquest—Bath, Dyrham, Cirencester, and Gloucester,—which leaves it even doubtful, that the capture extended at all even into the south-west corner of Gloucestershire; the angle of the Severn and the Avon.

Then again what ground is there in the scanty written records of the following century, for supposing that Somersetshire had already been conquered? Four years before Kenwalch penetrated south Somersetshire "æt Peonnum" we find him only yet attempting that feat upon this northern district, which he afterwards effected at a much more southern point. A.D. 652, he is recorded to have fought at Bradford by the Avon.[1] That is, he is still endeavouring to enter Somersetshire from the east. Should we expect to find a man knocking at the door

[1] "Æt Bradanforda be Afene". Most writers have been more or less puzzled because William of Malmesbury calls the place "Witgeornesbrug". (Savile, SS. 1601. p. 13.) Dr. Lappenberg indeed makes a third or precedent battle of it. It is not unlikely to be a mere variety of the same name. At any rate the "Wit" is most likely Wide=Brad=Broad; as the place that we call "Broadclist" was, in the time of Edw. Conf., called "Clist the Wid". (Cod. Dip. No. 940. There misprinted "Clift".) The last part of the name may be either "-bridge" or "-burgh".

of a house already his own, and of which he had the latch-key? Or to learn that he was still obliged to open it by force, soon afterwards, at another entrance?

Another reason for believing that North Somerset was not included in the earlier conquest is, that the Britons were Christians; whilst the conquerors of A.D. 577 continued, as a nation at any rate, or political body, in their ancient barbaric paganism. Whereas, except those districts of which the population remains to this day certainly British, there is no part of England of which the surface is so overspread with traces of the continuity, of the more ancient Celtic Christianity, until it became absorbed into that of the newly christened invaders. Not to speak of the unbroken transmission of Christian Glastonbury. Standing up in the midst, high into the daylight of written history, this was a witness that it was necessary to exclude from any theory of the earlier subjugation: the line of the Axe has therefore been most conveniently adopted, as passing north of it. But there are other witnesses, in the claimed district, which, like mice in the wall, have escaped the record of chronicle and charter; but can still remember their listenings, and confess them to us.

Not to make more than the most general reference to the peculiar hagiology of those parts of the British Islands that have continued to be substantially Celtic; and to those deep impressions of it which they still retain, in spite of the wear and tear of from twelve to fifteen centuries: we are only here concerned with those relics of it that are found on both shores of the Bristol Channel, and more particularly the southern. Cornwall of course is thoroughly steeped in this long-lived influence. But even there, the Irish constituent is conspicuous among those of

Armorica, Damnonia, and Cambria.[1] The traces of this early Celtic Christianity are also still to be found, spotted along the seaboard and its interior, far up on the English side of the estuary; where however much of the population is probably still essentially British, although of English speech; or at any rate continued to be so, until the Teutonic invaders had not only themselves become Christian, but had also melted into communion with their Celtic subjects or neighbours.

Leaving Cornwall, we find that St. Brannock has left his name as Brannockstow or Braunton, on the northern cheek of Bideford Bay. This Saint was the Irish missionary, who accompanied Brychan, the Regulus of the district in Wales which still bears his name as Brecknockshire. Besides this dedication on the southern shore of the estuary, he has left seven or eight churches with his name in South Wales. Farther up on the same coast we reach traces of St. Carontac a colleague of St. Patrick, in the name, though not in the present dedication, of Carhampton. And the like at St. Decumans. But these are in the north-west, and unpenetrated Celtic part, of Somerset. We now come to that part, north of the Axe, which has been claimed as a part of the pagan conquest of A.D. 577. In the midst of this district we find Congresbury, a name in which—a fly in amber—is included that of a personage very conspicuous in Cambrian hagiology: that of St. Cungar or Cyngar. The present church has a different dedication, St. Andrew: but there can be no doubt that

[1] For the intimate relations of the primitive Hibernian and British Christianity, see the late Dr. J. H. Todd's St. Patrick, &c. Dubl. 1864. Also, Cambro-British Saints, Welsh MSS. Soc. Also Loca Patriciana No. VIII. in Journ. Roy. Hist. and Arch. Assoc. of Ireland, April 1875.

the name of the place transmits the very ancient one of an older sanctuary, commemorative of this person. Attempts have been made to account for the name, as the equivalent of what we should now write Kingsbury; which is ingenious, but does not bear that close inspection due to such guesses. Indeed, Coney's-burrow would have had a more obvious pretence; but perhaps was passed by, because it would have conveyed a spark of jest, which might be out of place. But in a charter of King Edward the Confessor, A.D. 1065, Kingsbury and Congresbury ("Cynegesbyrig" and "Cungaresh-byrig") are both mentioned, in the same document, as different places.[1] It is quite certain that the influence, in this part of Somerset, that has been attributed to St. Cyngar, in legendary story, was a substantial reality of some kind; for at Badgeworth, about eight miles south, and just south of Axe, the church still retains his dedication. These two remains of his name, occupy each flank of the western extremity of Mendip. It will be remembered that King Alfred gave the church of Congresbury and that of Banwell to his friend Asser. On the opposite north shore of the Channel, the choir of St. Cyngar, with Llaniltud, Llangattock, and Llandaff, are recorded in the Gwentian Chronicle, as four monasteries destroyed by the Danes, A.D. 987. There was also a chapel of St. Congar at Lanivet Cornwall.

Another unmistakable relique of British Christianity, in this district, is the dedication—Ss. Cyricus and Julitta—of the church at Tickenham, about six miles north of Congresbury. This is a dedication which, although not of national origin, from some cause has been, almost exclusively, a great favourite both in Cambrian and Damnonian Britain. In Wales

[1] Cod. Dip. No. 816.

it is found as "Curig"; in Devon it is often heard as "St. Cyres". There are four or perhaps five surviving examples in Cornwall and Devon, besides that a high hill, between Honiton and the great hill-fort of Broadhembury, is called "St. Cyres", and most probably had a chapel at some time. There are three in Wales; and in the lives of Cambro-British Saints are printed six Welsh hymns invoking their intercession. It has been suggested[1] that the S. Julitta, found in Celtic districts, is a Welsh Saint Ilyd: but not only in the majority of the dedications have the names of both martyrs, mother and child, maintained their places; but the Welsh hymns referred to also invoke them both, "Curig ferthyr, a Ddwlitta ei fam ef".

Then we have in the valley usually labelled "in Gordano", between Tickenham and the sea, two dedications in the name of St. Paul. This name will probably not be conceded to the present argument, without some amount of grudge from those who look from a later system of the naming of churches, in which the primitive patriotic practice has been suppressed. But in the West of England it is believed that St. Paul usually stands for the famous Damnonian Apostle, first Bishop of Leon in Armorica, A.D. 512.[2] There is a third St. Paul, also on the sea shore, at Kew-Stoke.

There are also two St. Bridgets. One at Brean, at the mouth of the Axe, though south of the present outlet: another at Chelvey between Tickenham and Congresbury. Although the fame of St. Bride has overflowed her nationality, into a more catholic and more widely spread veneration; there can be no doubt that these are among the undisturbed footsteps

[1] Sir Jo. Maclean, Trigg Major, Vol. II. p. 307.

[2] See account of him, Haddan and Stubbs. V. II. p. 87. &c.

of the Irish Celtic missions, so visible on both sides of the Bristol Channel. A third St. Bridget was on an island near Glastonbury, called Beokery, which, in a Charter of K. Henry III., was still called "Little Ireland".[1] As at Congresbury, so at Kew-Stoke, there is an instance of the name of the ancient missionary remaining in the place-name, although the surviving church has preserved a different dedication. St. Kew's Steps, is the name of a remarkable flight of several hundred stone steps, from the village on the strand to the top of the mountain. The saint thus remembered in a traditional name—St. Ciwg—has a dedication still existing at Llanguick, on the river Taff which falls into the channel immediately opposite this ancient landing place. The name of this saint also remains at St. Kew, near Wadebridge, Cornwall. Cowick, a western suburb of Exeter, afterwards an alien priory, may also possibly be this name.

In the name of Keynsham, within the most northern edge of the county, is another example of the name of a Celtic Christian preserved in that of the town; although the present church, St. John, does not continue the sanctuary, which is itself extinct. This commemorates the name of another of the large Cambrian group who overspread the land in the fifth century, also commemorated at Llangenny on the Usk, and whose bell, found in her chapel there, of the ancient Irish oblong type, is still extant; and who is also remembered at St. Keyne in Cornwall. It is believed moreover that the doubt above expressed, of the extension of the pagan conquest of A.D. 577 to the south-west angle of Gloucestershire, might be similarly justified. On the north side of the Avon, one of the institutions of the

[1] Hearne's Jo. Glast. p. 420.

Hiberno-Celtic missionaries near the shores of the Severn estuary, not only lived through the period when the whole of Gloucestershire has been assumed to have been under pagan Saxondom; but still flourished with endowment in the twelfth century.[1] This was the church of St. Brendan the Navigator[2] which then overlooked the town and port of Bristol. In the time of William Wyrcestre it was still there; but was then in the custody of a "heremita". Now, the name of "Brandon Hill", is all that remains. Harpsfield says that St. Brendanus also founded the monastery at Llancarvan in Glamorganshire.[3] There is another of his dedications at Brendon, near Lynton, north coast of Devon. Perhaps the Brendon Hills Somerset also preserve his name.

It may be some compensation for the length of these particulars, that they indirectly discharge a real debt of justice to Ireland, of much longer standing than any that have so much exercised us for the last fifty years; in the recognition and realization of the spots, upon which that people planted these early seeds of civilisation along both the shores of our great south-western frith.

It ought to be unnecessary to repeat that the Lives and Legends of these personages are not here a part of our consideration. Our direct purpose is with the long continued local commemorations of their names: and to ask, whether any part of England which submitted to that rule of Saxon paganism that has been imputed to this part of Somersetshire, retains so many and such scattered

[1] Monasticon Angl. 1846. Vol. II. p. 75, num. LXXI.

[2] Todd's St. Patrick. pp. 459-60. Cambro-Brit. Saints. pp. 475-79.

[3] Hist. Angl. Eccl. p. 40.

traces of the continuity of Celtic Christianity as have here been cited. The Church of St. Martin at Canterbury, it is true, did pass through that night: but even that was revived from mere ruins; and its more eastern dawn was earlier: and its fortune was so exceptional as to have brought it within the range of direct written history. But in this case of Somersetshire, the incidents have been, in this aspect, hitherto unnoticed, and are spread over the whole district.

Thus, we see, throughout this district, the undisturbed reliques of the institutions of the antecedent Celtic peoples, still in their own places, unswept by any torrent of exterminating pagan conquest: the very cobwebs, left by the former occupants, still hanging from every beam and rafter. That, in fact, this district chiefly became English by the quieter process of intercolonization: and so, that the dialect of North Somerset, so different from that of the south, entered it by infiltration from the north or north-east. An exhausted country, such as Britain must then have been, may easily be conceived to have tempted this process: and it is certain that Teutonic settlements already existed far westward, in advance of the recorded conquests of the great leaders or kings of that nationality. These, no doubt, as they afterwards advanced, both claimed the allegiance of those scattered clans, and absorbed those of the former race who did not prefer exile to subjection, and fasciculated them into a political body. The Gwentian Chronicle several times, at a later period, bewails those of the Lloegrian Britons who exchanged their language for that of the invader. A.D. 823, it is complained of as "a proceeding customary with the Saxons" to take young children from their mothers, and bring them up as Saxons.

A.D. 838, "The Britons residing in England were obliged to turn Saxons, or quit the country and their homes in three months". A.D. 843, their Cambrian Prince "was necessitated to abandon the Welsh residing in England, who became Saxons". A.D. 890, "The men of Strath Clyde, who would not unite with the Saxons, were obliged to leave their country". This plainly indicates the consolidating pressure of political subjugators, upon two races who had previously been living in a semi-pacific state of inter-settlement: possibly not unlike the Belfast of our time. Small communities of the two nations, must have long been living more or less under terms of mutual forbearance, where there was room for both: not perhaps without occasional local conflicts, if encroachments were attempted.

Any one who remembers entire sunny days, spent in traversing the land upon the top of a stage-coach, cannot but have often seen, on the way-side, a cottage-like aspirant to the condition of a little farm, with a narrow knife shaped piece of land, making the garden and perhaps a small orchard at the bottom. This has evidently been at no distant time an appropriated bit of roadside waste land, and represents, in a later and stricter state of property, the sort of colonizing action, which in a much earlier and looser state may be easily imagined to have operated upon so large a scale as to equal the earlier or more legitimate occupants. Even our present much more compact and closely jointed social fabric, has still crannies, so numerous that populous foreign tribes can maintain a permanent though precarious existence in the midst of us.

One incidental episode is upon record, which might possibly illustrate the social condition of this district

in the midst of this very transition period. It is the well authenticated expedition of St. Augustine of Canterbury, about A.D. 601, to the western English frontier, to meet in conference the Cambrian Bishops. This, it will be observed, was just intermediate in time between the pagan Saxon conquest in Gloucestershire, A.D. 577, and the Christian Saxon penetration of South Somerset, A.D. 658: and the path traversed on foot, by the Saxon Christian missionary, and his attendants, must have been also intermediate of the two points of conquest, and through the very district imputed to be at that very time under the pagan rule of the earlier conqueror. The name of the place of conference, if not lost, has been obscured during the long interval; but the locality has been so circumstantially defined as to provoke a hope, or at least a wish, that it may not yet be beyond recognition.

It is not unlikely that these semi-pacific settlements, or colonies of the intruding nation, were sometimes the subsident results of violent privateering raids, or descents upon the coast. They may also to a great extent have arisen from a quieter growth of inter-occupation of a country, much exhausted by the retreat of their former conquerors, and the subsequent civil contests and disunion of the forsaken ancient populations, ready to accept cross-alliances with the strangers in their own dissensions.[1] It is true that religious hostility is reckoned among the most tremendous of political forces: and so it is—in its storms: which, like secular wars, are what chiefly appear of it in the ruder local history of earlier times. The tranquil intervals of mutual forbearance, underlaid by expediency, are unrecorded. But when the sea has a blue sky for its

[1] See Gwentian Chronicle, *passim*.

rival, it can match it with even a deeper azure. Such an interval, during these two transitional half centuries, seems to have prevailed here in the west, not yet politically subjugated.

It has been elsewhere shewn,[1] that a Saxon family, partly pagan, but in which three Christian sisters appear to have suffered persecution from their kindred, existed close to Exeter, before the national subjugation could have reached so far. And in the contemporary Life of St. Boniface we have, even an earlier (about A.D. 684) authentic glimpse of a pagan Saxon family, living in one of the most fertile valleys of mid-Devon, when the Royal power of Wessex was only in the middle of Somerset. In this is seen a young child of the Saxon name of Winfrid, receiving Christian influences from neighbouring—no doubt British—missionaries, apparently without the approval of his father, but encouraged by his mother, most likely a British Christian.

On the other hand, the westward progress of the central or political power of the Saxons has itself been sometimes prematurely dated from mistaken interpretations of chronicled names. Not to mention the contest of the two Bamptons, for an event that belongs to neither; a later advance of complete subjugation to beyond the Tamar, has been antedated by all the current historians. In the Chronicles, A.D. 823, a battle is recorded, of the Welsh, or Cornish Britons, and the, probably Saxon, men of Devon, at a place called "Gafulforda". In order to find a living name for this ancient one, the irresistible machinery of Grimm's Law has been turned on upon it, and it has come out as Camelford, in the north of Cornwall. But the name Camelford needed no such scientific evolution: the town is

[1] Arch. Journal, Vol. XXX.

situated on the river Camel otherwise Alan. Whatever harryings at this period may have been made by the West-Saxon king through Cornwall, must have been along the southern districts. At this time, it is as if certain that Dartmoor and the highland districts of Devon and Cornwall were occupied by the British—that is if these existed at all—and this inaccessible region must have been passed before Camelford could be reached. The frontier of the Tamar remained to be afterwards established by Athelstan.

The place meant by Gafulford is no doubt what is now called Fulford, in the parish of Dunsford, about eight miles west of Exeter, upon one of the south-eastern spurs of Dartmoor. And this annal is one of the earliest mentions of any still existing English family name. Of course the family since took their name of Fulford from the place which was their ancient inheritance. The complete name, Gafulford, almost tells the cause of a battle there. We ourselves sometimes have bridge or turnpike riots. At that time the Saxons occupied the lowlands south of Exeter, and between these highlands and the sea. And the battle may have arisen from a resisted attempt to enforce a "gafol" or toll, at a ford, which had become an accustomed boundary, at which a tribute was the condition of intercourse.

Most conquests of new kingdoms have probably been preceded, not only by piratical raids, but also by unopposed or tolerated tribal or commercial settlements, afterwards overtaken by, and concentrated under, central governing powers. Have we not ourselves seen this process consummated, upon the largest scale, in the case of our Indian dominion?

These considerations may help to a conception of the manner in which the people and dialect of North

Somerset, may have entered by infiltration, by a longer circuit, and a more gradual process, from the north-east; until they quietly prevailed among the Christian Britons, and ultimately united with the later intrusion of the recently converted Saxons, from the south-east.

## VESPASIAN'S INCURSION

Having thus long digressed into an attempt at an act of justice—the restoration, to the true locality, of those later, though still ancient honours, that have been improperly attributed to the spot which is the special object of our care; it is time to return to the consideration of Caer Pensauelcoit itself, and its true and far more archaic rights. But the ancient Welsh chronicles, even before they had submitted to the improvements of Geoffrey of Monmouth, had been written in times and among a people, wherein the science or instinct of discriminating history from fable had not been developed. Such as they are however, we must take them, or not at all: upon similar terms to those upon which we accept from nature those metals that are almost necessary to our existence. For these we are content to bestow, not only the labour of bringing them to the surface; but the skill to separate them from two thirds of their weight of refuse, by the expense of fluxes, or of purer metals for which they have affinity.[1] This

[1] From recollections of a letter received from the late Sir Francis Palgrave, some thirty years since, when a new edition of the Myvyrian Archaiology was first proposed, he was strongly impressed with a belief that these Welsh "Bruts" would be

is how the narrative is circumstanced which has given us the name, and the most important event in the history, of our long lost city. The name, as beforesaid, has been confirmed by another witness: which, although from the same nationality, is a totally independent one—The Catalogue of Cities. We have also seen that this has strong internal evidence of credibility, and has been very generally accepted as respectable, even by those who have not bestowed upon it the close inspection that has here been taken of it; but who have, on the other hand, passed by the narratives of the Bruts as hopelessly contaminated by fable.

It has been shewn, that the most direct cause of the discredit that has befallen the indigenous British narrative of the expedition of Vespasian, was the corruption, at an early date, of the name of the place of his landing. A corruption, which as early as the twelfth century had fructified into a second error, that Exeter was the scene of his first engagement, much too far westward to be reconciled either with circumstantial probability, or with the testimony of the Roman writers. The account of these exotic witnesses has been hitherto the only accepted one; and the facts attested by them are few and summary. But when put into contact with the British narrative, as thus rectified; the true history is at once obvious in the resulting amalgam. All that the Roman historians say is, that Vespasian, on his expedition from Germany to Britain, under Claudius, A.D. 47, fought thirty battles, and subdued two most powerful peoples or nations, more than twenty towns, and the Isle of Wight close to Britain. The

found to contain, in solution, a large amount of the lost genuine early history of this island, much of which might be reclaimed from them.

British narrative, restored as above to its true locality, and purged of the error which had placed it so far westward, is, it will be seen, perfectly consistent with, and complementary of, this. It adds to these details: that Vespasian with a large fleet first attempted to land at Thanet—Rutupia; but being repelled by the British King or General Gweyrydd with a numerous army, sailed—westward as the Roman story shews; landed at a port of which the name has been shewn above to be unfortunately obscured by corruption and thereby misplaced, but which was certainly famous through succeeding ages; and marched to, and besieged a city called Penhuelgoit or Pensauelcoit, the capital, no doubt, of one of the two powerful nations. The British story also continues, in accordance with the Roman assertion of the subjugation of the southern Britons; by an admission that, "when the winter was over, Vespasian departed for Rome, having previously sworn Gweyrydd to perpetual fealty to the Romans".[1] There does not appear to be any thing in this joint narrative to indicate, that this siege of Vespasian was the occasion of the final desolation of the city; but this could not have been very long afterwards. It must have happened at a very early date; otherwise it would be unaccountable that all knowledge of the locality, and all except the name of the city, should have so entirely passed out of memory.

With all this is also perfectly consistent our venture above put forth, that Christchurch harbour was likely to have been the celebrated and frequented port of the Lloegrian Britons—that has had its name,

[1] Chronicle of the Kings, translated by the Rev. Peter Roberts. 1811. p. 38. The Welsh text called "Brut Tysilio", in Myv. Archaiol. Vol. II. p. 193.

from an early date, confounded to "Totnais"—from which the Roman General advanced into the territories of the powerful peoples whom he subdued. Opposite the west end of the Isle of Wight, stood in sight the mouth of this harbour, wide open, and crying "come this way" to any invader desiring to stretch his grasp across the south-western peninsula of Britain. Our Caer Pensauelcoit occupies the raised central basin in which rises the Stour that reaches the sea in that harbour. This river skirts the western edge of the impassable wilderness and morass, which afterwards became the nucleus of the New Forest; and the valley of this river, or perhaps the chain of hill-forts that flank it, leads shortly and directly up to the great city pointed at by the British narrative, as the principal object of Vespasian's incursion. The island is scarcely within the actual view from the heights of Penselwood; but it is believed that one, or at most two, posts of observation would have maintained telegraphic intercourse. The string of fortresses, that stretch from the sea to the Caer—as Hengistbury, Badbury, Hodhill, and Hameldon, may probably be counted among the "super viginta oppida" of the Roman biographer of Vespasian.

So that, in substantial confirmation of this combined testimony of the two accounts—Roman and British—we now find, on the mainland, a place, certainly within the limits of any district, of which the Isle of Wight could have been the basis of attack, that could also have included twenty towns, the capture of which would deserve the boast of Roman historical pens; which to this day bears the same name, as in the two ancient witnesses, with the very slightest possible accommodation to our modern speech,—"Penselwood". This place not

only stands upon the strongest, most commanding, and most central position of the south-western peninsula of Britain; but contains, within its own ample physical circumscription, all the natural resources required for a very great population, living in a defended, but municipal or peaceful, condition; and still presents visible, though now rapidly diminishing, evidences, of the former existence, and astonishing extent, of such a great and indeed metropolitan community: greater than we have been accustomed to think of as a reality in those early times: a prize that might well have tempted the ambition of an Imperial conqueror.

At all events, here was once a truly great city, the long lost Cair Pensauelcoit.

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## ALAUNA SYLVA

During the progress of the foregoing investigation, a collateral, but totally distinct, proposition came into view. At first this was disregarded or discouraged; not without perhaps a wholesome suspicion that it might be one of those shadowy side phantoms, or repeated images, that haunt the vision when engrossed by a single object. It continued, however, so irresistibly to assert itself, that it ulti-

mately enforced its claim to a like careful examination; and, it is thought, to a share of whatever attention may have been deserved by what has been already said.

Thus far we have had to do with the British vernacular name of "Caer Pensauelcoit". But it is also evident that the ancient cities, towns, and rivers of Britain were, in very many cases, known to the early foreign geographers by totally different names from those that were current among the people themselves. In many cases, an altered form of the indigenous name itself may be distinctly perceived in the foreign one; in which it has been only reduced to exotic habits of utterance, or to the genius of the language into which it has been conveyed: but in other cases the names used by the foreigners were quite different; and, instead of being copied from the mouths of the peoples conquered or visited, have been newly imposed by the strangers, at the suggestion of some circumstance more obvious to them than the original nomenclature; or the nomenclators are found to have been attracted by some indigenous name or description, different from that which afterwards became the traditional or more usual name among the Britons themselves. Of the former kind, Eburacum for Caer Evrauc=York; Domnonia for Dyfnaint=Devon; and Venta Silurum, &c., for Caer Gwent; are examples: of the latter Aquæ Sulis for Caer Badon=Bath; or Durovernum for Caer Ceint=Canterbury; will be remembered.

Among the genuine remains of these ancient foreign topographers; a catalogue of British cities, towns, and rivers, which rivals the vernacular ones, both for absence of method, and for the large proportion of its unsolved riddles—the raw materials

of conjecture, if not of pure fancy, of which the sport is much enhanced by the manifestly depraved orthography even of those names in it that can be undoubtedly recognised; caused by the obviously corrupt state of the only two manuscripts in which it is known. This is what is known as The Chorography of Britain by the Anonymous Geographer of Ravenna.[1] In this catalogue, except that the island is divided into four sections by three lines across, at the smallest diameters, from sea to sea, no method or order is pretended. Indeed it has been declared "that such is the method of it, that it cannot be in our power to settle from it the situation of a single town, since we cannot discover, what was the particular plan, or whether any, which the author made use of in the arrangement of them".[2] This impossibility, however, is what will here be attempted. The first of the four sections is the southern one; which is that which concerns us, and contains about eighty names of cities and chesters—"civitates & castra". About thirty of these eighty have their presumed recent names assigned to them by Roger Gale: some of which may be accepted without dispute, but the majority are at least open to the greatest doubt.

But, although no order is pretended, yet a certain itineral succession very frequently crops out: as by accident, in the course of an irregular jotting down of the catalogue; as if the compiler was aiding his memory by maps, or journals of routes: and, in a single remarkable instance, this method seems to be confessed in the only explanatory note of the kind

[1] Printed with Antonini Iter, T. & R. Gale, 1709. 4to. p. 139, &c. Britannia Romana, Horsley, 1732, Fol. p. 489. Monumenta Hist. Brit., 1848, Excerpta xxiv.

[2] Reynolds's Introduction to Antoninus, Camb. 1799.

which interrupts the compiler's mere catalogue of the entire island of Britain. His first name, evidently starting from the Land's End or Lizard, is Giano, which, although neither Roger Gale nor Horsley have ventured to say so, is manifestly the same as the mouth of the river Cenion, the first name of Ptolemy's survey of the south coast, usually appropriated to Falmouth Haven. The Ravennat's fourth name is "Tamaris", agreeing with Ptolemy's second, "Tamarus"; and is fairly attributed by Gale to Tamerton; at least it must be some place on the Tamar. Then follow, in the Ravennat, eleven names—a large number however for the interval—before we reach "Scadum Namorum";[1] that is of course Isca Dumnoniorum or Exeter. Then continue five more names, unassignable, but probably towards north Devon; when the list is interrupted by the forementioned note; indicating an abrupt return to Exeter, to pick up a fresh route from thence in another direction—"Item [various reading "Iterum"] juxta suprascriptam Civitatem Scadoniorum est civitas quæ dicitur—Moriduno", with which name the list is resumed; and, on turning to Antoninus, "Muriduno" is found to be also the next name, eastward of Isca Dumnoniorum, in both his Iters XII and XV. The much disputed question, whether the Antoninan Muriduno stands for Seaton at the mouth of the Axe, or Broadhembury near Honiton, or where else, is immaterial to the present purpose. It is, in both Antoninus and the Ravennat, the next station east of Exeter; but here these two authorities part company. Antoninus goes on to Durnovaria = Dorchester: but, we must assume that, the Ravennat diverges by a more northern and more direct route eastward to his next civitas, which he calls "Alauna

[1] Various reading "Scadoniorum".

Sylva"; and here we follow him alone, for his is the only record of this name, and this is the solitary extant mention of this name of a city or town; or of the adjunct "Sylva" combined with any town. "Alauna" by itself, as the name of various rivers, as well as towns, is frequent enough. The Ravennat's next station eastward is "Omire"; which, with some amount of likelihood, has been assigned to Southampton; and this would quite consist with what will be said below, but otherwise does not now concern us. This name, "Alauna Sylva", has however been as great a riddle to the interpreters of our ancient topography, as we have seen "Caer Pensauelcoit" itself to have been: and the present intention is—although not with the certainty which in that case favoured us, from finding that ancient vernacular name still actually alive and at home; yet with at least the highest amount of probability, of the kind with which, in such questions, we are usually obliged to be content—to attribute this exotic name to the same spot, as that where we have already discerned such extensive traces and capabilities of a great and municipal population.

The descriptive adjunct common to the foreign, the British, and the English forms of the name—"-sylva", "-coit", and "-wood",—is so obvious as not to require further mention; and, if unsupported, would be but a slender identification. Although the Alauna Sylva of the Ravennat is the only example, among the foreign topographers, of this suffix to the name of a British "civitas" or "castrum", there are other examples of "-coit" among the British cities, and "-wood" is not unfrequent in English names of towns, if not of chesters. But what if it should turn out that the

ancient name of the river, which rises within the basin occupied by our Pensauelcoit, near the north end, flows through the middle of that city, and passes out at the other end, should prove to have been known to foreign geographers as "Alauna", although we call it "Stour"? The capacious harbour at its mouth—Christchurch—was certainly known to them by the name "Alauna": and so were several others of the rivers contributary to that harbour. Would they not have been likely to have given the name "Alauna Sylva" to so great a city, situated in a great wood, which they must approach by that harbour and river, and which they would reach by following that river from its mouth to its source? The itineral order in which the single mention of Alauna Sylva has reached us, has already tempted several conjectures to places, not many miles from where it is thought we have now found it; although hitherto not to the actual spot. Indeed, they would hardly have been likely to have fixed upon this place, as we have seen that they did not heretofore know that it had ever been a city at all.

It is believed that, as in the cases formerly recounted, attention has been distracted from the true locality by an erroneous interpretation of an ancient text: which interpretation has been afterwards followed as an established fact. In Ptolemy's description of the southern coast of Britain, one of the stations is the outlets of the river Alænus (Ἀλαίνου, with a various reading Ἀλαυνου[1]). The older topographers, until Horsley, had always placed this at the Salisbury Avon with its outlet of Christchurch Haven. But in Horsley's "rectified" interpretation it was removed westward to the Devonshire Axe, with its estuary at Seaton. Although Ptolemy's scale of the

[1] Monum. Hist. Brit., Excerpta xiii.

south coast, from the Lizard to the North Foreland, is probably correct in the order of names, it is evident that there is at least some great error in his measurement of some of the intervals. The stations are, 1. The Promontory Ocrinum (Lizard?); 2. Outlets of the River Cenion (Falmouth); 3. Outlets of Tamarus (Tamar); 4. Outlets of Isaca (Isc or Exe); 5. Outlets of the River Alænus (the Axe according to Horsley, followed by Mr. W. Hughes's map in Mon. Hist. Brit.); 6. Great Haven (Portus Magnus; the Solent at Portsmouth in W. Hughes, but Poole Harbour in Horsley); 7. Outlets of Trisanton (the Arun of Sussex in Hughes, Southampton Bay in Horsley); 8. Portus Novus (usually placed at Rye); 9. Cantium Promontorium (North Foreland).[1]

It will be found from Ptolemy's geodesic notes of longitude, annexed to these names, that when measured either from the Outlets of Cenion, or from the Kentish Promontory, by the sums of the interval measurements, the result for the Outlet of Alaunus very closely answers to Christchurch, the outlet of the united Avon and Stour: whilst that for Portus Magnus also nearly corresponds for Portsmouth. On the contrary, both the Axe and Poole Harbour, as placed by Horsley, would each of them be above two degrees out of place, westwards, for the two stations to which Horsley has allotted them. It is certain that there is some very great error in Ptolemy's very short measurement between Isaca and Alaunus. Possibly a name has dropped out of the text, which name may now be represented by Portland.

This short interval, of only two-thirds of a degree, seems to have tempted Horsley to place Alaunus at

[1] Gale Scriptores XV. p. 738. Horsley Brit. Rom. p. 358. &c. Mon. Hist. Brit., Exc. xiii.

the Axe: perhaps also influenced by a wish to reconcile Ptolemy's longitudinal notes of the coast, with those of his inland cities to the north of them. Mr. Hughes has followed Horsley in adopting the Axe, although he has withdrawn from his sequential misplacement of Portus Magnus at Poole Harbour, by which Horsley had sought to conciliate the next eastward interval. Mr. Pullman,[1] the latest writer on the Axe, appears to continue the claim of Alaunus for that river. As to any etymological identity of the names "Axe" and "Alaunus", it is about the same as the relation between Monmouth and Macedon: we shall however presently see that the rivers which unite at Christchurch have very strong pretensions of this kind; and whatever harbour capacity may have once belonged to the now silted mouth of the Axe, is much surpassed by what still exists at Christchurch. The old topographer, W. Harrison, when describing the Salisbury and Hampshire Avon, said that this was the river that was "supposed to be the same which Ptolemie called Halenus":[2] and Camden also says, that at Christchurch "Stour and Avon fall into the sea in one united mouth, which Ptolemy rightly calls the mouth of the river Alaunus". Some of the latest geographers also have shewn a disposition to recede from the arbitrary ruling of Horsley and his followers; for Spruner brings the name back eastward, but only to place it at Poole:[3] Mr. C. H.

[1] Book of the Axe.

[2] Description of Britaine, p. 56, in Holinshed, 1586. This observation seems, however, to belong to John Vowell *alias* Hoker, for it is only found in the second edition of Harrison, among the additions by the learned Chamberlain of Exeter.

[3] Atlas Antiquus, Spruner-Menke, 1865, No. xviii.

[4] Hist. Maps, 1869, Brit. Rom. See also his reasons at his p. 7.

Pearson, however, still more recently,[4] marks the present Axe as "Axium"; and returns the name "Alainos", not indeed to the Avon, but to its confluent sister river the Stour.

Rivers are the rivals of mountains in the reputation of conservatism of their names: yet, a closer examination would bring out many examples of inconstancy in both. Even in the present century some hills have almost lost their ancient names in exchange for such as that of "Tom Paine", because perhaps the effigy of that unworthy may have been burnt upon the top of one of them. Among rivers, aliases of an ancient and immemorial date are far from being rare. Many of the names given, by the ancient foreign geographers, to the English rivers, are not capable of being identified with indigenous names, ancient or recent. Some of the modern names approach the ancient ones with more or less etymological grounds for recognition; but others can only be identified when accompanied by some circumstance; such for instance as their place in an ancient description of a coast line. That the branches or contributaries of rivers were not always, as they now mostly are, distinguished from each other by separate names, may be inferred from many examples. Like a tree, a river, with all its branches, was only one object, with only one name, common to its embouchement or trunk, and to all its ramifications up to their various sources. To foreigners especially, the name of the estuary would be the most obvious: the tributaries have afterwards been renamed, in accordance with their own languages or dialects, by the various nations or peoples who have settled upon them and adopted them as the arteries of their several territories: sometimes by entirely new names, perhaps descriptive of some feature or

quality discerned by the settlers: sometimes by a mere adaptation of the indigenous general name of the river system, found by them already established in its estuary. Many have not even yet encountered the need, which has been the cause of their distinction from each other by separate names; content with "east" or "west", "north" or "south", added to the name common to both branches. Thus we still have "North Tyne" and "South Tyne", "East Teign" and "West Teign", and the like. Of this habit in river nomenclature, to change the names of some portions of them, or even to leave their ancient names only in their minor branches, there are many examples. There is the Somersetshire Parrett, of which the mouth was known to the ancients as "Vexala" or "Uxela Æstuarium". This name however has been changed for "Parrett" throughout the main stream, but turns up again in some of its confluents: as the "Ivel", with its chester "Ischalis"; and again, distinguished by another filing down, in another branch called the "Ile". Another example is Ptolemy's "Outlets of the Abus", a name which after being extinguished by "Humber", reappears as the "Ouse" of Yorkshire which falls into it.

This was evidently the case of the group of rivers under our immediate attention. Their united estuary at Christchurch we have seen to have been called by Ptolemy the "Outlets of Alaunûs": and this was no doubt one of the many rivers, of Celtic peoples both insular and continental, that were called "Alauna" by other ancients, and otherwise variously known as "Avon", "Allan", "Alne", "Eaulne", "Llawen", "Lune", and other kindred names. Sometimes the "l" survives in force, sometimes the "u" or "v". One of the principal streams of this

outlet is now well-known as the Avon which passes Salisbury and Ringwood. The other is the Stour, which rises within and passes through our British "city in the head of the High Wood" already decribed; and joins the Avon at Christchurch, the ancient English Tweoxnham or Twynham—the ham or holm betwixt these two rivers. But, although "Stour" is probably also an ancient Celtic name, it was most likely the alias, in the vernacular of a different people from that who called it "Alauna", or the indigenous name which took that Latin form.

Some evidence of this is still left to us. A few miles above the junction of the Stour with the Avon, near Wimborne, a small river which still bears the name "Allan" or "Allen" falls into the Stour, and of course loses its name in that of the main stream, until, as we have seen, the name "Alaunus" and "Avon" crops up again by confluence in the common estuary. Can it be doubted that at least the interval of a few miles, although now called Stour, at one time shared the name now borne by the same stream at both ends of that interval? But there is another vestige of the name Alaun on the banks of the Stour, at a point yet much higher up than the junction of the Allen. The well-known name of "Blanford" still flourishes on both sides of the stream. In this name is preserved an unmistakable impression of the ancient name of the river, although the name itself has perished in that part of the river, and been replaced by the present name of Stour. Alavna = Vlan = Blan is an etymological sequence which can well afford to face the scrutiny of the latest and most scientific philology.

This connection of the name of Blanford with Alauna, the past name of the river, was suggested by Dr. Stukeley. The usual affectations of squeam-

ishness of quoting his name, and terror of being identified with his etymologies, are ungenerous in those cases where they are undeserved, and where he after all turns out to be right. It is strongly suspected that even the present generation has still a great deal of wading before them, before they get out of the "præ-scientific" quagmire. Few are perhaps floundering more deeply than some of those who now most affect this sort of contempt for their antecessors and pioneers. The inductions of the præ-scientific, like the logic of women, often include premises or observations or experiences, which, although sound, are so subtle or obscure as to evade the meshes of the earlier essays of more scientific method or more fastidious research; although more perfect systems may hereafter apprehend and confirm them. Dr. Stukeley explored the kingdom on horseback; and no doubt his horse was governed by the bridle: but the rider's fancy and conjecture had no such curb; and in this he was no better than others of his time. But he excelled most of them in industry and in acute observation; and was highly endowed, not only with that vivid imagination which is the lamp of research,—although he often confounded it with fancy which is its will-with-a-wisp—but which in his day wanted the wholesome restraint of more exact criticism; but also with the earnestness, enthusiasm, and untiring perseverance, that in all times must be the mainsprings of such pursuits. He says, when writing of Wimborne, near where the Allen falls into the Stour, that Wimborne was "on the river *Alauna*, seen plainly in *Blanford*, being the ford over the *Alauna; Llaunford*, in the Belgic pronunciation: called now *Allen* river".[1] The Rev.

[1] Itin. Curiosum. Cent. II. p. 125.

John Hutchins[1] calls this a "mistake", and justly corrects him for saying *now* called Allen; Blanford being on the Stour much above the junction of the Allen: but Stukeley's error was merely of the pen, and arose from his mind being occupied with a conviction that the Stour was the Alauna, which Hutchins could not comprehend. Though Hutchins afterwards wavers towards the same notion, in his second volume.[2]

But Stukeley was not alone, among præ-scientific antiquaries, in thinking that the ancient name of a river may have been common to its tributaries. The learned author of "Britannia", when dealing with another and distant branch of the same river-system of which we have been speaking, was evidently impressed with the notion that, although it now bears another name, it also had been a constituent of the Alauna. The Wiley is one of the higher confluents of the same Avon that joins the Stour at Christchurch; and Camden, writing of Ellandunum, as the ancient name of Wilton on the Wiley, says: "From this name of Ellan I am somewhat inclined to think this river was the ALANUS placed hereabouts by Ptolemy". The question whether or not Ellandun was Wilton, as Camden took it to be, does not concern us; but his inference shews that what has been said above, of the whole systems of rivers having had a common name, was a floating principle in a mind in which it must have been a very broad induction; and that he even thought that so distant a branch as the Wiley had been at some time included in the same name as we have been claiming for the Stour.

Another possible contribution, to this chain of

[1] H. Dorset. 1774. Introd, lxxiv. Vol. 1. p. 75.
[2] Vol. II. pp. 144 & 324.

Indications of the participation of the Stour in the common name of this series of streams, may be offered, for what it may be worth. In Asser's Life of King Alfred occurs a place-name that has not hitherto been appropriated. It is in one of the autobiographical passages; and can hardly be otherwise than written by Asser himself. He tells of the "villa regia, quæ dicitur Leonaford", where King Alfred retained his companionship for eight months, reciting to him his books, &c. "Leona-" is thought to be also a very probable Anglo-Saxon transliteration of Alauna. About six miles above Blanford is another traject of the Stour, now known as Sturminster-Newton-Castle: a manor which King Alfred bequeathed to his younger son;[1] and King Edgar afterwards granted it to Glastonbury.[2] Coker[3] records a tradition that on a mound there "cast up as it seems by Man's Hand, stood formerlie a Castell and House of the *West Saxon* Kings". Was this the villa regia, which is called Leonaford by Asser? Examples are far from uncommon of river crossings being removed in different ages, in compliance with changes in the course of traffic, or in preference for a better passage. We have the Old Passage and the New Passage on the lower Severn; the latter being a return to an older than the Old Passage: and higher up, in Shropshire, Quatford was very anciently replaced, two miles northward, by a Cwatbridge, which afterwards became mere "Bridge", and then Bridgenorth, as we know it. So also the Alaunaford of King Alfred's time, which has since become Stour-minster, may have dropped lower down to the Alaunaford that became Blanford.

[1] K. Alfred's will, Cod. D. Nos. 314 & 1067.
[2] C. D. No. 545. Mon. Angl. Glaston, No. 97.
[3] Survey of Dorset, p. 100.

Very few have hitherto ventured to identify the place of the Alauna Sylva of the Ravennat. William Baxter,[1] tempted only by the "Sylva", conjectures *Wood*bury near Exmouth, which compels him to Topsham for the intermediate Moridunum: and in this he is followed by Stukeley. The late Mr. James Davidson[2] says that Alauna Sylva is "perhaps" Castle Neroche, which is near Taunton, induced no doubt by its contiguity to the Axe, then, as we have seen, thought to be Alaunus. The Rev. Thomas Leman had already made very nearly the same guess, although he had not printed it; for, in his copy of Horsley's Britannia,[3] he has written in pencil "Taunton Dean" against the name in the Ravennat's catalogue. And, although the ancient author—the Ravennat—expressly reckons it among his "Civitates et Castra", Mr. Pearson sketches and tints it as being literally a wood, over the area of the New Forest, and describes it as "likely to have been in the district between the Stour and the Anton",[4] east of the mouth of the Stour; and not, as here proposed to place it, at the source of that river.

If what has been said should have confirmed the opinion, of Camden and the older topographers, that Christchurch Haven was the "outlets of Alaunus", and that the Stour participated the family name of Alauna with its other tributaries; there appears to be also good reason to believe that the famous city, called by indigenes Pensauelcoit, the metropolis of some large territory of a south-western nation of the Britons; which has been shewn to have covered its

[1] Gloss. Antt. Brit.

[2] Brit. & Rom. Remains near Axminster, p. 69, 1833.

[3] In the Bath Roy. Lit. & Scient. Institution, p. 491.

[4] Hist. Maps, Brit. Rom. & p. 7.

source and the first two miles of its stream; and which also stood in the itineral order which would be satisfied by it; was the place meant by the exotic name Alauna Sylva of the Anonymous topographer of Ravenna; and was probably known by that name to foreign geographers; or to Roman invaders who must have approached it from the "Outlets of Alaunus", and by the valley of the river of that name.

## THE LLOEGRIAN PORT TALNAS

It was at this point that this separate collateral question, of the extraneous ancient name, was intended to be left to the judgment of the reader. But at this point also one fact already mentioned again came to mind; which, if it should have the significance thought to be discerned in it, will go far, not only to substantiate the suggested connection of the two questions—of the indigenous and of the exotic names—but also to jointly confirm the interpretation that has been offered in each of them.

Reverting to the reading of "Talnas"; for the name which, as already shewn,[1] so unluckily and so generally became confounded with "Totnais": "y draeth talnas" is the form in which the name of this much frequented landing-place appears, in the oldest of the British Bruts[2], for the earliest alleged incident: the landing of the mythical patriarch Brutus. It is therefore the earliest textual record of the name of that port: as far at least as the records

[1] At page 43.

[2] Brut Tysilio, Myv. Arch. Vol. II. p. 114.

of it have been made accessible in print; for any field of inedited manuscripts, that may remain beyond these, must here be left unreaped. It will be remembered, how many of the names of rivers have the initial "T"—and the same is to a less extent the case for the initial "S". This initial has in many cases been thought to have been a preposited particle, or the ruin of one.[1] Among the many British rivers called by the ancients "Alauna", besides those still known to us as "Avon", "Aune", &c. and as "Allan" or "Ellen", others still perpetuate the same name in the form of "Aln". If the method of solution should be permitted that is hereby suggested, the name given by the British writers to their port would resolve itself into "'t-Aln-as"; and if Christchurch Haven should be conceded to be Ptolemy's estuary of Alaunus, it would also be the port called by the Britons "Aln" or "'t-Aln-as", from which Vespasian advanced up to Alauna Sylva or Caer Pensauelcoit—the City in the Head of the High Wood—covering the source of one of the two main streams of that river.

[1] See W. Baxter Gloss. Brit. v. Tamarus. Edw. Lhuyd Arch. Brit. tit. I. p. 40. Perhaps also Zeuss Gramm. Celtica on Pronomina infixa "t", "th", &c.

## AFTER-WRITS

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*Page* 37. DOLBURY AND EXETER

Although one of these places is now a bleak and barren limestone down, upon one of the western spurs of Mendip, and the other one of the brightest and liveliest of our provincial cities; there are points, both of strong resemblance in their material features, and of parallel in their probable first causes, and in the backward extension of their early fortunes; which may serve to point the great contrast that they now present to us, and lead down to the issue which may account for it.

The outline of the ancient fortified inclosure, and the contour of the inclosed area, is extremely alike in both: including nearly the whole of the tabled promontory upon which each is situated; but not quite all, although evidently chiefly influenced by it in plan. The area within both inclosures is a gradual slope; and the main land from which the promontory is separated, in each case, still continues to rise outside the wall. The right hand upper quarter is the highest part within both; and is much higher than the left hand part of that highest side. This highest corner must, from the earliest occupation, necessarily—and evidently was—have been in both the stronghold, fortress, or keep. Although both must have been constructed and walled by some earlier people, they have both been

afterwards occupied by Roman subjugators; whose streets yet remain in each. In Dolbury these are now only hard raised causeways, crossing each other as usual; but all buildings are wanting. Still, at certain seasons, rectangular blocks of buildings are suggested by groups of nettles or weeds, favouring certain parts; and these, when viewing the entire area from the highest point, by contrast of colour, bring to mind the etched hatchings sometimes seen in a roughly sketched plan of a city. But these slight indications may not long be visible, as it is said that the promontory is likely soon to be converted into an ornamental plantation. At Exeter, any such buildings, as imagination may thus restore at Dolbury, have of course been substantially renewed, over and over and over again, by later and later successors; and so have come down to us as we now see them, inhabited by an uninterrupted stream of life and activity.

The wall of Dolbury is now a huge continuous heap or mound of a large sort of shingle or unhewn limestone, like what remains at Worlebury in the same neighbourhood; and like that was probably a dry uncemented although regularly faced wall, which, from the enormous quantity of material still in situ, must have been very strong. That at Exeter, much of it still remaining, must have been a large mound of earth or other materials of the district; afterwards partly replaced, or to a great extent surmounted, by King Athelstan's cemented wall of squared stone; portions of which have been thought by critics of ancient masonry to be discernible in the present nearly entire wall.

Dolbury and Exeter must have been two cities whose early history—if that can be called a history which has neither been written nor told—was, for

an immemorial long period of time, parallel. What we know of Exeter, before what is written, is that it was successively a British caer, then a Roman castrum or strong seat of the government of a civitas: next a Saxon chester or self governing free state: then, by a special subjugation, a Norman Royal city, from which its continuance down to what we now see it is well known. Dolbury was also successively a caer and a castrum; and here the parallel ends, for thenceforth it was "a furzy down" as it remains: its Teutonic suffix "-bury" it shares, most likely, with many other strong places of earlier peoples, that had already become desolate when this addition accrued to their names.

The area, contained within the shingly ramparts of Dolbury, is only about one fourth of the extent of that within the ancient walls of Exeter. But it is not to this difference in size that the contrast of their present condition is due. Dolbury is as large as the ancient inclosure of the town of Bristol, which has since far outgrown, both in size and importance, the much larger ancient Exeter. Very few substantial relics of the walls of Bristol remain, although those of Exeter are almost entire: but the original wall of Bristol is distinctly marked by the parallel circuit of the ante-mural and supra-mural streets, or perhaps what are sometimes called the "murivant" and the "pomœrium". At Dolbury the materials have remained for many ages in a continuous heap along the line upon which, throughout an unfathomable previous duration, they had stood erect, in a cliff-like wall many feet thick. Dolbury and Exeter were alike in having all the requisites of a strong hill-city in the earlier time: Exeter lived on because, in addition, it had those natural advantages which had become the necessities of a later

municipality; chiefly a capacious tidal estuary. In a certain sense Bristol was probably a successor of a contiguous "Caer Odor"—a name by which the Welsh have continued to know the port—of a long protracted antiquity, but not of its identical site. It was never in itself either a caer, a castrum, or a chester; but it may have been a bury, and was next a town, and ultimately a city, in a modern sense of this word. The continuous vitality, of the fortified inclosure of Exeter, still as actually to be seen and perambulated as can that of Dolbury; covers the combined long duration, both of the now forgotten Dolbury, and of the ancient and still flourishing Bristol.

*Page* 58. SCEORSTAN, A.D. 1016.

This is a name that has been variously placed by the authorities. Gibson, Lye, the Rev. John Sharpe, and Sir T. D. Hardy,[1] place it at the "Four-Shire-Stone", near Chipping-Norton. And they are supported by the neighbouring Post-Boys; who on passing the spot tell how it was once "up to your knees in blood". But this is their usual expression of stories of battles, which they have generally got from the speculations of learned passengers, and are not traditions at all. The late Mr. B. Thorpe, who found a place in Oxfordshire—near Banbury—called "Chimney", observed that "skorsteen" is the Danish word for "chimney":[2] ergo—. But Chimney

[1] Will. Malmesb. Lib. II. § 180.

[2] Note to Lappenberg A. S. Kings, 1845, Vol. II. p. 189. Also in his edition of Flor. Wig. Hist. Soc. 1846, Vol. I. p. 174.

might remonstrate in favour of a scientific etymology of its own. It was probably a place where "cheminagium", a forest toll, was collected on the mere of Wychwood. Miss Gurney places Sceorstan at "Saresden, Oxon". Others at Sarston, Hants.

But perhaps Sherston, near Malmesbury, as given by Camden, Dr. Ingram, and the late Professor Bosworth; also by Mr. Thorpe himself, when in a graver mood,[1] both from the situation and the strength of the position, and traces of earthworks there, is most likely to have been the Sceorstan of the Chronicle. This place is close to the point at which the limit of Wiccia was struck by the Fosse-Way, which had also passed near to the field of the preceding battle "æt Peonnan". The Chronicle says the Sceorstan battle was "after Midsummer", as if Pointington had been earlier in the year: but the interval could hardly have been long, for his army still consisted of the Dorset, Devon, and Wiltshire men, who must have been first mustered and arrayed there. Neither is Sherston without the accessory testimony of "Popular Antiquities" or "Folk-Lore"; for in the centre of the town is an old inn, called "The Rattlebones" the signboard of which is a picture of a warrior hewing down his foes right and left. A local antiquary has been content to suggest that this represents "some local hero": but it is more likely that the painting is an imaginary portrait of Edmund, and that "The Rattlebones" is a local traditional synonym of "Ironside".

*P.* 16. "Celtic freedom of plan".—Many villages, in various parts of England, may still be seen, where they have not been disturbed by roads

[1] Anglo-Sax. Chron. 1861.

through them, in which the houses seem to have been spotted down at hap-hazard, and what may be called the streets pass round even single houses, and are no wider than the intervals of the Pen-Pits. Such places are often found where small valleys end at the sea shore, or at the heads of coombs. The "streets" are now often paved with irregular multangular slabs, fitted together. In such places the entrance to a house is often by a descent of several steps. What is this but a pit, with a house raised over it? Why, we are all the while still living among "pit-dwellings"—as we are speaking prose—without knowing it.

*P.* 17. "A genius"—that is, a man born with his eyes open: an accident occasional to both Celtic and Teutonic races.

*P.* 22. Sauel- ... Huel- ... Sevel- ... Seuel- &c. It is scarcely necessary to remark upon the etymological identity, in British names, of "s" and "h". The much quoted example of "Hafren" and "Severn" will at once be remembered. The identity of "u" and "v", until quite recent usage has established a distinctive use of them, is even still more notorious: but it may be worth while to protest, that editors of ancient texts should print them as they find them; for by changing "u" into "v", at their own pleasure, they now-a-day import an instrument of interpretation to which they have no right. It is to be regretted that even the learned editors of that Bible of English History, the Monumenta Historica Britannica, have not held themselves restrained from this too common liberty.

*P.* 56. "The *finer* samples of Wansdyke". Not the *finest.* The bank at Milborne Week probably equals any samples of Wansdyke west of

"Morgan's Hill". It is not to be compared with that grander portion of this work which winds along the northern brow of the Wiltshire downs for many miles eastward. Had the painter Turner seen this, when he conceived a well known picture of an enormous ophidian reptile, coiling over the crests of mountains, and trailing into the valleys?

Again, at page 2, the earthworks at Penselwood are not meant to be compared with some portions of the complex triplicate works in the great military hill fortifications, such as at Maiden Castle and Eggardon. The chief rampart at Penselwood is a single lofty escarpment, much increasing the acclivity at the top of the great natural elevation.

*P.* 58. "Hirondelle". This recollection has been corrected by meeting with a veteran driver. The coach which, among others, passed along the Fosse-way, through Ilchester to Bath, was called the "Coronet". The Hirondelle ran from Cheltenham to Birkenhead.

*P.* 62. "—the junction of the Ivel with the Parrett".—It will be gathered as the meaning, that the pursuit or conquest extended along the north of the Ivel to its junction with the Parrett. And this has since received, what appears to be, a very remarkable confirmation. The note [3] page 63 was already printed without any knowledge that the recommendation was in effect being carried out. A meeting of The Philological Society, of Nov. 17, 1876, is shortly reported in the literary journals,[1] from which it appears that Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte, who is reducing this branch of philology to nearly the condition of an exact science, visited Somersetshire in August last; and, quoting

[1] Academy, Nov. 25, 1876, p. 527.

Mr. G. R. Pullman, reports that a dialect prevails over a district including Axminster, Chard, Ilminster, *Martock*, *Yeovil*, Crewkerne, and Lyme Regis. Some of these places it will be observed are north of Parrett but none are north of Ivel. It seems also that Merriott, South of Parrett, and Montacute, north, participate in some local peculiarities of speech; shewing that it was not that river that, in this part, divided the tides of Teutonic settlements.

*Pp.* 64-73. "Hagiography of North Somerset".—In a paper, since read at the Congress of the British Archæological Association, in Cornwall; this course of enquiry was extended over the remainder of Somersetshire, and over Devon, Wilts, and Gloucestershire, in an attempt to discern traces of the extent of the ancient kingdom of Damnonia outside the present boundary of Cornwall.

It will have been observed, that the names of St. Congar, St. Kew, and the others, in North Somerset, several times recur in the dedications, both of the English south-western counties and of South Wales. These names, thus written upon the land, are the most authentic text and the original record of the national "hagiology"; which is not, as some critics seem to imagine, to be found only in legends and books, old or new. Books and writings, indeed, stand somewhat in the same relation to this science, as do the lapidary collections of Gruter and of Hübner, to the inscribed stones themselves. Messrs. Haddan and Stubbs include Inscriptions, and even uninscribed Antiquities, among their "Ecclesiastical Documents"; why are these not collected by them? It is truly wonderful, that so vast a ruin of long past conditions of the land and the peoples should never have been mapped and carefully registered.

## THE OCCASION OF THESE PAGES

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Many years ago, a place-name fell upon the ear of a "George-the-third-schoolboy", which was the first to awaken a suspicion that such names were sometimes names and something more: that the name of a place might often have within itself an obsolete descriptive or historical significance; or in fact might contain, or be, a fossil word or phrase. This notion was soon after quickened, by finding that the same name, although of an inconsiderable village, had appeared, in essentially its present form, in the earliest English national record of an event more than eight centuries earlier. (See note at pp. 46-47.) No further pursuit of this suggestion followed: such matters were presumed to be well cared for, and safe in the keeping of the learned.

But this long rest of confidence in the authorities, in this matter of the names that are mentioned in our early records, lately encountered a serious disturbance and disappointment. The very place-name above remembered has, within the last ten years, been, by a very learned, smart, and enthusiastic writer, persistently perverted, and recoined into a modern-antique, to serve as a witness to a præ-

conceived theory. So arbitrary a perversion of a house-hold word challenged a scrutiny, which grew up into what is here printed. It also provoked a glance backward, at what had meanwhile been doing by Victorian scholars, critics, and historians, who perhaps had scarcely even breathed the lethal atmosphere of Georgian days: from which it appeared, that the identity of ancient names with modern ones, had been very often accepted by the authorities, upon the most slender grounds. Not to dwell upon the indulgence of so doubtful a practice, as the active "permutation of letters", in the reduction of a living place-name to conformity with an ancient one, or with what science thinks the ancient one ought to have been; the most slender pretext of likeness, in an ancient name, to a modern one is constantly found to have been accepted at sight, and then re-issued with the stamp of authority. Sometimes, the exhibition of mere learned ingenuities seems to be the ultimate object, without any apparent aim to convince. Most frequently a mere similarity of sound is enough, often with no pretension to be either scientific or learned: so that the practice in such cases, has very commonly degenerated into what involves no higher principle, than that which wins in a simple game, of which the aim is to collate the corresponding marks on a set of bone or ivory pieces.

This must be the excuse for the present trespass over these unaccustomed paths. Not but that any such apology is, after all, rather an act of grace

than of debt. The language is ours, and we made it: both these long-lived place-names and the other parts of our speech. We have already seen that some of them have been safe in our custody for a thousand years and upwards: not, it is to be hoped, in these latter days, to become the prey of mere scientific præconceptions. In the ears of some of us these place-names are old and treasured memories; and the tampering with them is, to such, a real and sensible grievance. It cannot be tolerated that these, our native and common pastures, should now be converted into game-coverts, or exclusive hunting grounds, for the speculations of the learned; nor that these, our millennial growths, should be warped and lopped, into artificial harmony with foregone theories. Any such invasion, on the part of "scientific philology", may, it is hoped, justify an attempt at a reprisal of our spoil; even by a transgression of the sacred precincts of that learned function.

Thomas Kerslake.

Bristol.